

CBW

Coach and Bus Week

The PSV industry's news weekly • 1 March 1997 • Issue 258

AUTHORISATION CUT FOR GCT

**Licence reduced
by 30 vehicles**

HOW FRIENDLY IS THE BENDI?

**We take a look
at artic coaches**

BANNED FOR SIX MONTHS

**Hills of Hershaw
off the road**

FIRST SLICE OF CAPITAL ACTION

**FirstBus buys
CentreWest**



Is super Pointer round the corner?

PLAXTON: THE WAY AHEAD

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Training only part of the equation

TRAINING is far too often seen as a quick fix to a staffing problem. Need a driver? Hire someone and train them. Introduce a new computer system. Ensure installation includes on-site training for operatives.

It's equivalent to a functional approach to a puncture or bodywork damage. Unless the tube is patched or panel replaced the coach or bus has to stay in the yard.

Why not ask a few basic questions first? Like: "How many times has a rear offside panel been replaced?" Then you will probably discover a vulnerable dry-stone wall on a particular route. There could be actions that will prevent the damage.

This type of thinking underpins our attention to Investors in People over recent weeks. Investors gets to the heart of coach and bus management. It encourages a fundamental look at the culture which determines attitudes and relationships.

Given that needs can be identified within a framework of thinking that goes beyond solving a short-term need, training is integral to a process that keeps improved quality service as the target.

Thankfully we can identify forward-thinking companies which show the way ahead. Among coach operators, Clarks is the first with IIP but others such as Rennie's of Dunfermline

are working to the same goal.

In this issue of *CBW* you will read further confirmation that manufacturers are putting quality achievement at the top of their agenda.

Plaxton, under guidance from its new plant director Geoff Lee, has thrown out old thinking that quality should be checked at every stage of production without each employee taking individual responsibility. Why should they when faults are picked up and rectified by someone else?

However, an operator and its staff may be perfectly presented and its vehicles immaculately built but the customer can still be let down. What happens if the heating is temperamental, the video flickers or the drinks machine blows a fuse?

Suppliers should be working to recognised standards and benefit from consistent training. At the moment no-one in our industry is tackling this critical deficiency. Unless something is done, all the other fine work and fine sentiments are papering over a crack wide enough to undermine the industry's road to higher quality standards.



Mike Morgan,
Editor

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▼ Obituaries

Boydons partner

DOUGLAS Martin Boydon, partner in Boydons Coaches of Winkhill, Staffordshire, has died aged 73. He was predeceased only two months before by his brother and fellow partner, Derek.

Mr Boydon joined his father in the family business, keeping it running throughout World War 2.

Ill health forced him into semi-retirement some years ago but, following his brother's death, he started once again to take an active part in running the business with his sons.

He leaves a widow, two sons and a daughter.

Malcolm Hurst dies

MALCOLM Hurst of Hursts Coaches, Wigan, died suddenly last Friday aged 64.

Mr Hurst's suffered a heart attack at home.

Having started with one coach in 1969, Mr Hurst had built up the business to a 21-vehicle fleet and the day before his death was actively involved in the business, making the buying decision for a new tri-axle Scania Century which the family-owned company says will be dedicated in his memory.

He leaves a wife, Joan, daughter Valerie and two sons, Malcolm and Stephen.

Stop Press

NATIONAL Express has won the seven-year ScotRail passenger rail franchise which provides the majority of rail services in Scotland together with Anglo-Scottish sleeper services. It is committed to 38 new trains for Strathclyde and nine for Edinburgh-Glasgow.

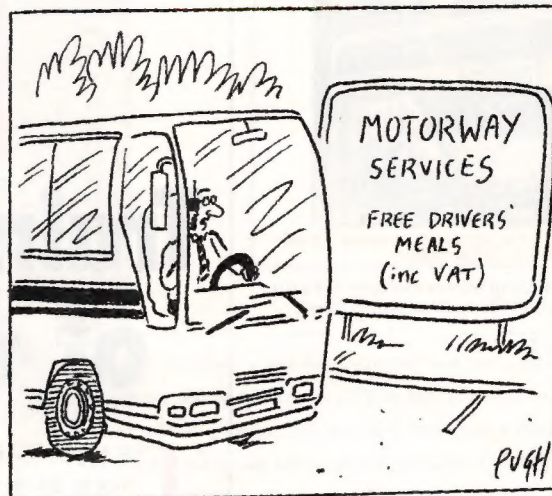
▼ Coach

VAT due on perks

CUMBRIA-BASED Westmorland Motorway Services Ltd must pay VAT on the full retail price of inducements offered to coach drivers to encourage them to stop at service stations, the High Court in London decreed last week.

The decision overturned a tribunal ruling last May that VAT should be payable only on the cost to the service station of the inducement. However, the final outcome has attracted less publicity than the practice of offering inducements itself, with some newspapers describing it as a 'scam' and a 'ruse'.

The High Court judge, Mr Justice Lightman, described how deals had been struck with service stations whereby the driver would get free cigarettes and a meal in return for stopping a coach at the station with 20



"ARE WE REGISTERED VAT ?..."

or more people on board for at least 30 minutes.

The driver would go to the service station shop and give the name of his company and number of people on board, the judge explained. He would then collect his free cigarettes or cash in lieu before taking a free meal at the self service cafeteria.

Justice Lightman rules that, although the food and cigarettes were gifts, they were still liable to be taxed.

A spokesman for Customs and Excise, which brought the High Court case, said: "We are aware the press is looking at this as a morality issue but that is not our business. We saw this as a barter arrangement and believed VAT should be payable on the full retail cost of the cigarettes and meal." He understood the offer of inducements to be widespread, involving drivers from a large number of coach companies.

▼ Bus

Offer gives FirstBus capital foothold

FIRSTBUS' £54 million offer for former LT subsidiary CentreWest Ltd stands to give employee shareholders up to £6,000 each, if they vote in favour of the acquisition, which will give FirstBus its first operating bases in London.

The offer, which has already been accepted by the company's four directors, is currently being put to over

2,300 CentreWest shareholders, who must declare their acceptances in time for an extraordinary general meeting to be held on 18 March.

The shareholdings, which were distributed free, in three tranches, following the company's privatisation in September 1994, are accompanied by a range of assurances on employment and pension rights including maintenance

of present rates of pay, local identities and status of CentreWest as part of the group.

In addition to operations in West London, the company acquired the operations of the Berks and Bucks Bus Company and London Buses from Len Wright's Q Drive in March last year. CentreWest md Peter Hendy said that, as part of the deal, all existing management would stay on. "FirstBus shares our philosophy of service quality, produced by investment in people and assets, and I'm pleased that our employees, shareholders and customers will have the opportunity to benefit from being part of a larger group."

The £54 million consideration includes £30 million of debt repayment, £5 million for the redemption of preferred ordinary shares owned by HSBC finance, and £19 million for the equity, of which £6.9 million will be shared between employees, with the remainder going to the four directors, seven senior managers and HSBC. FirstBus will finance the deal through a combination of a new share issue and internal resources.



CentreWest shares FirstBus philosophy of service quality

▼ Coach and Minibus

Belts under

by Mike Morgan

BRITAIN'S coach and minibus industries held their breath this week as the controversial screening of the BUSK-financed seatbelt pull-test on a 16-year-old Plaxton Supreme hit the nation's TV screens.

Trailers for the BBC1 *Here and Now* programme presented the coach as a vehicle which "only last week was carrying children to school."

Industry trade association, the Confederation of Passenger Transport, moved quickly to allay fears over safety of children on school transport. Director general Veronica Palmer condemned sensationalist

retro-fitting put TV microscope

Busk-financed pull-test fails to meet M3 standard

reports as irresponsible and said: "We are the safest vehicles on the road with or without belts."

What followed was footage of the test under the auspices of Dr George Read at Manchester Metropolitan University. The Supreme body had been cut and the rear mounted on a test rig prior to being subjected to a European standard M3 - ie 6.66 G pull for 0.2 secs.

The result was replayed several times to show the seat ripped from its floor and side-wall mountings. But the seatbelt and its anchorage remained intact.

Dr Read, who confessed that minibuses have

been his main concern, and the programme documented examples of belts on side-facing bench seats and three-point belts on low-back seats - alleged dangerous installations - in a sample of school minibuses. He concluded that some older vehicles are not designed to be fitted with seatbelts.

It's a view confirmed by the manufacturer, Plaxton. Managing director, Neil Beresford said he stood by his opinion that he could not see an economical way of finding an engineering solution to fitting belts and meeting safety requirements in pre 1988 coaches.

Mr Beresford said:

"Someone has to demonstrate that successful test work has been done on the floor and the seat.

"These older coaches are not as safe as newer vehicles. However, the older coaches are much safer than a car." Sympathising with operators pressured by customers and legislation, Mr Beresford said: "It is clearly wrong that some operators are trapped between economic realities and the needs of the law.

"However, it is equally wrong that we are trying to fool the public and it is disingenuous for people to turn a blind eye to the problems of retrofit."



Testing time: call to demonstrate success

Meanwhile, seatbelt fitter, Dave Nickson of Elite Services, has the evidence of MIRA tests to support his claim that seatbelts can be fitted to older coaches ...and comply with the M3 standards.

He has offered BUSK

a second test using a Duple Dominant fitted by Elite with seatbelts. In a letter to BUSK founder Pat Harris he said: "I shall be arranging a complete test of the seatbelts, anchorage points and seat to floor, to an M3 load for 0.2 seconds."

▼ Coach

News Digest+++News Digest+++

■ **APPROACHING** £10 million of Scottish Office transport challenge fund money is to be ploughed into two schemes designed to promote bus usage. Aberdeen City Council will receive £5.3 million to help fund a park and ride scheme along the busy A944 route between Kingswells and the city centre.

And a further £4 million has been awarded to Stirling Council to introduce North Sea gas powered vehicles on a corridor linking the castle, the town centre and a park-and-ride facility at a new business park. The £30 million funding package announced last week by the Scottish Office will also help support a 390 space park-and-ride facility at Ferrytoll interchange, north of the Forth Road Bridge.

■ **BRIAN** Souter, Ann Gloag and two other Stage-

coach directors - Brian Cox and Keith Cochrane - have all elected to take their dividend out of the company in the form of shares. The decision was hailed by the Perth-based group as 'a vote of confidence' in the expectation of its shares going higher. Following an interim dividend, largest shareholder Brian Souter has seen his number of shares in the group rise by a further 126,301 to more than 36.5 million.

■ **SPECIALIST** insurance broker Spencer Moray has started trading. The company comes about as a result of the management buyout of BMS Chapman Stevens Bristol office. Coach fleet and travel related insurances will continue to form the backbone of the company's activities.

■ **OVERTON**, the supplier of coach and bus body fittings has gained ISO 9001

quality accreditation.

■ **SJ CARLTON**, the Rotherham-based UK concessionaire for Neoplan, is poised to start work on its new parts facility. The work will include new offices and an increase in computerisation. More staff will be taken on.

■ **EMPLOYEE** shareholders of Taybus Holdings have given unanimous backing to the company's £12 million take-over by Birmingham-based Travel West Midlands, the National Express subsidiary.

Employees who paid £500 for a single share in the company when it was privatised six years ago can each expect to net upwards of £25,000 from the takeover. As part of an employment protection resolution, each employee will be allocated one share - valued at £1 - in the new TWM-owned operation.

▼ Coach and Bus

Free copy of guide

THIS week CBW gives you your free copy of the 1997 *Coach and Bus Guide*.

Hot off the press, it is the definitive directory for all operators seeking information on all aspects of the PSV industry.

It contains the comprehensive up-to-the-minute listing of coach and bus operators to date.

And, for the first time, we bring you all the big bus groups with full details of their subsidiary companies.

In addition the guide lists industry suppliers, manufacturers, and dealers.

If you need further copies of this invaluable refer-

ence source, ring the CBW circulation dept on 01733 467048 where you can purchase them for £25.



In brief

Ports report

POOR access to ports damages the economy and the environment says a report from the British Road Federation. It says ports traffic is up almost 20 per cent in 10 years and is calling for a special fund to pay for better roads.

Scania blow

DESPITE increasing market share for trucks and buses in western Europe from 14.3 to 15.5 per cent, Scania's profits slipped for the second successive quarter at the end of 1996. Total sales for the year fell from 44,637 to 42,991 and a significant fall in demand is expected in its European markets. Coach and bus sales in Europe increased by 4.7 per cent, strengthened by its largest single UK order for 144.

EU fuel duty

EUROPEAN transport commissioner Neil Kinnock has given the International Road Transport Union unambiguous confirmation that European Union member states may apply differential rates of excise duty on fuel and, where applicable, a lower rate to commercial diesel.

Alternatives

PUBLIC transport improvements can be proposed by local authorities as alternatives to trunk road proposals following a change agreed by the Department of Transport and Department of Environment, making road schemes subject to review under the Regional Planning Guidance system which sets out strategic policies.

PMT deal

FIRSTBUS subsidiary PMT has joined forces with car dealer King Ford to sponsor a Ford Explorer 4x4. It is believed to be the largest single vehicle sponsorship deal in the UK.

▼ **Coach**

Web claim challenged

Operator on Net for six months

by Mike Morgan

DURHAM City Coaches has challenged the claim by Peter Davie of Nova Travel to be the first coach company to offer its services on the Internet (CBW, 22 February).

In fact, director Michael Lightfoot says Durham City has gone one step further by advertising its Web address on the rear of its coaches.

Mr Lightfoot said his company had been on the Net for the last six months. However, he doubts that Durham City is the first UK coach company touting its wares worldwide.

He said: "It is still

early days for the Internet but I truly believe that the Net will become an essential marketing tool for many companies within the next few years.

"We can already claim some success with our Web site as it has helped us to secure a contract worth £10,000 this Summer transporting an American choir around the UK.

"It is quite an expensive exercise to get on the Net. However, we were lucky to get sponsored by Durham University Business School and County



Durham City Coaches: 'web won us work'

Durham TEC through their joint venture, The Page Project. It was the Page Project's aim to make local companies more aware of information technology systems and to give

them access to the World Wide Web. The sponsorship that we received was worth about £1,000."

■ Find out more on www.cdtec.co.uk/ext/durhamcitycoaches.

▼ **Bus**

New DPTAC low-floor spec



DPTAC chairman Bob Taylor: access push

THE Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) has a new bus specification covering the essential design requirements of low-floor buses.

It complements existing DPTAC spec by covering the additional features required in fully accessible vehicles.

The PSV Accessibility Regulations will introduce mandatory access requirement for new buses under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and they will be circulated for consultation.

Meanwhile, DPTAC's new document will help manufacturers, local authorities and operators ahead of legislation.

■ Copies are available from: The Secretariat, Zone 1/11, Department of Transport, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR. Tel 0171 271 5258.

▼ **Coach**

Harrington buys Halls

ROBERT Harrington of Coventry has spread his wings with the acquisition of Halls, Bedworth's oldest family coach firm.

Mr Harrington started Harrington's Coaches with a minibus four years ago and previously ran a taxi firm. He has offices at Baginton Airport and a PCV driver training school.

His expansion into Bedworth follows a long-standing sporting contact with the area. As a football referee he is one of only a handful of officials to have twice taken charge of the Bedworth Nursing Cup final.

Eight-coach operator Halls was a third-generation family business which started as a haulage company and had one of the first solid-tyred charabancs in the area.

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integrated monocoque construction means all the components are specifically designed to work with each other, eliminating interface problems; and heavy duty mechanicals add up to reliability and long service too.

At Optare we know that buying a bus is the first step in a long term commitment, that's why we operate a 'one-stop-shop' philosophy. From single source purchasing right through to lifetime support for servicing and parts.

And we can help you with financing too. Our range of bespoke packages means you can buy Optare vehicles on terms which suit you - and your accountant. If you would like to know more, call us on **0113 264 5182**.

Its a small step, but it could mean a giant leap for your business.



EXCEL, THE DETAILS ADD UP

▼ **Coach**

Dennis mods allow revamp

MODIFICATIONS by Dennis have allowed Plaxton to build the first coach bodies with centre Continental exit and sunken toilet on Javelin chassis.

First built are two for Hong Kong and a demonstrator has been built for the UK.

Taking the Javelin GX as the base, the changes to the chassis do not affect the location of major components but free space in the frame on the offside. All future Javelins will be built to the



Ten Excaliburs for Pemico follow in the wake of Dennis demonstrator new standard, giving operators and bodybuilders this extra option.

Peckham Mini Coaches, trading as Pemico Travel of Bermondsey, will be first in the UK with the centre toilet GX when it puts a trailblazing fleet

of 10 on the road in May.

This year is the family-owned company's silver jubilee and director David Roff explained the choice of coach which will replace all 12 full-size vehicles in the Pemico fleet at a stroke.

He said: "We wanted to upgrade the fleet, like the Javelin and preferred the Excalibur."

At present the company runs Javelin, Scania and Leyland in addition to five midicoaches and a large fleet of LDV minis.

▼ **Coach and Bus**

Rethink over quality control process

PLAXTON, under guidance from its new plant director Geoff Lee, has thrown out old thinking that quality should be checked at every stage of production without each employee taking individual responsibility.

Mr Lee was brought in last November to take responsibility for the Scarborough and Anston manufac-

turing plants of the Henly subsidiary. Surprisingly he says there's "not a million miles difference" between the industry he left, aerospace, and coach and bus manufacture.

It's an assembly process using thousands of individual parts while making sure that quality and high-levels of productivity are in focus across the system. He said: "It's all about delivery, cost and quality and the process of continuous cost control was present in aerospace."

Consequently he quickly focused on the outdated inspection orientated approach. He is driving forward a change to quality control where people who do the job take responsibility for their own contribution to the finished product.

Mr Lee said: "I want a move to a culture where

everyone owns their own quality." He says the key to the new audit culture is a detailed definition of standards at each production stage so that statistical control techniques can be used.

He claims that such techniques are common within the automotive industry. Indeed, he says coach and bus is one of the last bastions of the old quality control methods, which are shown to be less effective. "Why should it be when workers can adopt the attitude that faults will be picked up, and fixed, by someone else?"

Based on the belief that "constant change is here to stay," Mr Lee is promoting frequent opportunities for two-way discussion with the shop floor. Regular 'Plaxton Tomorrow' seminars present the company's strategy while daily start-up meetings cascade suggested solutions up through the organisation. Mr Lee said: "Within an hour of starting work issues can be addressed."

Quality has become a moving feast, according to Mr Lee, who says that standards acceptable today will not be accepted tomorrow.

Meanwhile, increased productivity continues to come under the Lee microscope. He said: "Productivity has doubled in the last three years and we can do it again."



High flyer: Geoff Lee has aerospace experience

▼ **Bus**

Plaxton could

SUPER Pointer could be round the corner as Plaxton maintains its policy of continuous development to ensure the sales momentum for its top selling-midibus is maintained.

First unveiled as a Reeve Burgess body on Dennis Dart, Pointer production quickly moved to Scarborough to spearhead a revival in bus body production by Plaxton, taking the company into the low-floor arena for the first time last year with a wider body on Dart SLF and Volvo B6LE. At the same time the 10.6-metre Dart took Pointer into the full-size single-deck league.

And Pointer bus bodies are expected to be the continuing success story as Plaxton gears up for 1997 orders.

Last year the company sold 603 Pointers and built 588 while its target for this year is 700-plus, according to sales and marketing director, David Quainton.

With production now heavily focused on the low-floor product first launched at Coach & Bus 95, Mr Quainton confirmed that

▼ **Coach and Bus**

High tech

THE next generation of Plaxton coach and bus bodies remains a closely guarded secret but CBW has learned that the relentless march of new technology will have a major impact on the designs for the year 2000.

An investment in the latest computer-assisted design software has been commissioned at Plaxton's Scarborough headquarters placing its engineers at the leading edge.

Bus engineering

On 'super Pointer' be in the pipeline

Changes as firm gears up for '97 orders

by Mike Morgan

further refinements in the pipeline include new front and rear styling... and Su-

per Pointer. Though he refused to lift the veil on all the details, some Pointers will shortly be leaving Scarborough with a new image

inspired by Ogle.

However, this is more than a face change, adding 100 mm to total length.

Rounded corners soften the overall front and rear as angles have been taken off to produce a welcome look which will be echoed by a re-designed interior.

Sutrak heating using coach-type roof-mounted intakes will be fed through a radiator and blown through TVI-supplied coving which incorporates Invertec lighting.

The perimeter floor-mounted system is likely to be retained and the thermostat control will include gradual fade between low and high fan speeds.

The fresh look has flush bonded single or stepped double-glazing and a side moulding will extend around the vehicle at skirt height.

Attention to the rear moves the air-intake from roof-top to the side, puts filler caps behind profiled corner flaps and adds high-level warning lights.



Scoop: our first sight of the revamped styling



This year coach output will settle at 10 a week

▼ Coach

Output on the up

OUTPUT from Plaxton's Eastfield factory at Scarborough will be driven up this year.

Pointer production lines will be turning out 16 a week and 'unprecedented' demand for Beaver minibus on the new Mercedes-Benz Vario means output is expected to be around six a week, 50 per cent up on last year, by the second half of the year.

Meanwhile, coach production will settle at around 10 a week. Coach orders going down the line during CBW's visit to the factory last week included: three dozen

Premiere 350-bodied Volvo B10Ms which are part of Wallace Arnold's 1997 order; a debut batch of 10 air-conditioned Premiere 350s on Dennis Javelin GX for Travellers; 19 Volvo B10Ms for Excelsior with a mix of Premiere 320, 350 and Excalibur bodywork; Premiere 350-bodied B10s for Bakers of Biddulph (4), Classic Coaches (4), and Tellings Golden Miller (2); seven DAF Bus SB3000 with Premiere 350 bodies for Speedlink; one Excalibur/ B10M for Easons and a Premiere 320/Dennis Javelin for Slacks.

CBW

is key to the future

manager Ron Cresswell demonstrated the new system, which enables designers to work in three-dimensions. He said it was a major leap forward from the old 2D approach.

Once loaded with data from the chassis manufacturer the designer has a visual display that is as close to the virtual reality as they could wish for. Body components are added and the image can be rotated, enlarged and reduced.

Components can be detached and added. Weights and build tolerances can be calculated.

Drawings can be printed for the benefit of the shop floor and suppliers, ensuring accuracy of fit.

With each terminal costing £55,000 the company is determined to give its design team an efficiency boost commensurate with a parallel drive in increased productivity and quality.



A new dimension: 3D design now being used at the Plaxton factory

▼ Bus

East Lancs clinches big decker orders

Four won for the soon to be launched Premyer

by Mike Morgan

EAST Lancashire Coachbuilders has secured four major orders for its soon to be launched Premyer double-deck bus body.

Using common components with East Lancs' other products, the Premyer has conventional steel-framed structure and matches Spryte or Flyte single-deck styling on the lower deck with Cityzen-like top deck.

Largest delivery will be to Nottingham City Transport, which is to take 25 on Volvo Olympian and B10M chassis for fleet re-

placement. London Transport Buses tender successes have prompted the three other orders - all from customers new to the Blackburn-based body-builder.

Harris Bus is to take 22 on Volvo Olympian - 10 with single entrance and 12 centre-staircase two-door. Also on Olympian will be 15 dual-door Premyers for Metrobus.

First to be delivered will be nine two-door Premyers on Dennis Arrow

chassis for Capital City-bus. Single-deck low-floor business secured includes first sales to a FirstBus operating company - Greater Glasgow taking eight 10-metre Sprytes on Dennis Dart SLF.

Meanwhile, the company continues to build up to 12 buses for stock sale by Fleetmaster or Martins and has just sold 10 10-metre Sprytes to Town and Around of Folkestone. Six two-door Sprytes for Meteor Parking's Pink Elephant Stansted car park contract.



Premyer: style blend of Cityzen and single deck

Regional Seatbelts Round-up+++Regional Seatbelts Round-up++

▼ North Lincs

All advised

"ALL contractors ... have been advised of their responsibilities," said a North Lincs Council spokeswoman. Transport Minister John Bowis said: "We must now seek the encouragement of parents and teachers to reap the safety benefits of seatbelts by encouraging children to wear them." (*Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph*)

John Bowis said: "Those operators who have not already installed suitable belts into their vehicles will be obliged by law to put road safety first." (*Grimby Evening Telegraph*)

▼ Hampshire

Accidents fall

LEGISLATION followed coach and minibus accidents yet bus and coach accidents in the UK have steadily fallen over the last decade. NOP re-



AS seatbelts became compulsory for all minibuses and post-1988 coaches used to transport school children reaction throughout the regions has been mixed. Here is a sample of what the local papers had to say:

search reveals that operators fear legislation doesn't go far enough, because there is no guidance as to how the wearing of safety belts will be enforced. (*Portsmouth & Southsea Journal*)

▼ Lancashire

Already done

MANY safety-conscious minibus and coach operators have already installed seatbelts." (*The Evening Gazette, Blackpool*).

Burnley MP Peter Pike has a letter from county councillor Gordon Johnson expressing

concern about exemptions. (*Padiham & District Express*)

▼ Cambridgeshire

Sensible use

JOHN Holmes, Cambridgeshire County Council's deputy transport co-ordination officer, said: "Sensible use of belts, where fitted, can only improve the already high safety record of home-to-school transport." (*Cambridge Town Crier*)

"The question of attendants was addressed by assistant director of education, Kevin Man-

ley, who described it as "enormously expensive," although the county council does have supervisors on some journeys involving young children on the A14 and A1. "There are practical problems using parents," he said. (*Cambridge Evening News*)

▼ West Midlands

Not enough

CRITIC Solihull councillor Jim Ryan says the new law does not go far enough because it does not make seatbelt wearing compulsory. Education chiefs say they are determined to make children wear them. (*Solihull Times*)

▼ Scotland

Law slated

NORTH coach companies have slammed the new law. Michael Beveridge of Highland Scottish questioned who is going to enforce seatbelt

wearing; operator Norman Arthur of Strathpeffer says it is an unfair financial burden on the small operator. (*Inverness Courier*)



▼ North Yorkshire


Loopholes

CHILDREN'S Transport Safety Network's North Yorkshire co-ordinator Helen Paul says there are "Whopping great loopholes." The legislators did not go out and see the sort of vehicles children travel in, she said. (*The Northern Echo*)

▼ Berkshire

Feeling safe

"ONE in a hundred passengers may strap in. Most do not bother because they feel safe and comfortable with the driver," said Lombard Business Forum delegate, Jack Jacobs. (*Reading Chronicle*)



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Bus

First showcase route running

West Midlands Line 33 result of Quality Partnership

THE first of the West Midlands showcase routes, Line 33, was introduced last week. It brings together a £3.5 million quality partnership involving Travel West Midlands, highway authorities, Centro (West Midlands PTE) and the West Midlands Police.

Launched by Bob Taylor, Lord Lieutenant of the West Midlands County and chairman of the DoT's Disabled Persons' Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), Line 33 aims to provide a comprehensive improvement to all aspects of bus services, and a direct

by Andrew Jarosz

benefit to passengers, using state-of-the-art bus facilities.

Each partner provides key elements of the project. Travel West Midlands has introduced 15 Wrights-bodied Volvo B10L low-floor buses, and around 30 customer care trained drivers.

Birmingham City Council has provided bus priority lanes, bus priority calls on traffic signals, together with appropriate docking facilities using Kasel kerbs for wheelchair access.

Centro has provided new bus shelters and will soon supply real-time information at stops, and take responsibility for monitoring arrangements and project co-ordination.

Route 33 from Birmingham to Pheasey follows the A34 Walsall Road corridor and serves Perry Bar (one stop shopping centre, rail station and University of Central England), Kingstanding and terminates 0.5 km inside Walsall district at Pheasey church.

Of the 26 km return mileage, there will soon be 10.5 km of bus lane equivalent



Line 33: aims for comprehensive improvement

lent to 40 per cent of total route length. The lanes will be restricted to buses, taxis and cycles for 12 hours per day.

Over 100 bus stops have been converted to docking facilities with high quality shelters, some of which will accommodate wheelchairs and give real-time information. Route frequency has been raised to eight vehicles per hour, but stays at two per hour on

evenings and Sundays until midnight.

The whole package of improvements on the first route is not yet complete, but is intended to provide the basis for further corridors to be included in next year's package bid, possibly as a major scheme package of five or six routes, although two are currently being highlighted - one in Coventry and one in Walsall.



Bus

The name chance

CONTRIBUTING directly to the Derby Breast Scanner Appeal Fund, the Namesake Appeal run by Heather Ward in conjunction with Trent Buses, offers an opportunity for individuals and groups to name one particular Trent vehicle for a year in return for a £100 pledge.

The appeal, which has now passed its first milestone of £25,000, was celebrated by the special naming of Volvo B10B 136 as "Melbourne Male Voice Choir".

Pictured are Mrs Ward and Trent's managing director Brian King, who is also chairman of the choir, and has been performing with the group over the last 10 years.

Bus

Malta replacement slows

DESPITE giving overwhelming approval to the arrival of low-floor buses to the Island, Malta's Public Transport Authority appears to be viewing the replacement of its historic bus fleet with less enthusiasm, with reports that the whole process has been put on hold.

Malta's outgoing Nationalist government had left a pledge that at least 150 vehicles would be replaced through direct subsidy to vehicle owners.

The Labour Party, which came to power last November, made no such pledge, and it is understood that financing difficulties, together with an unexpected budget deficit, have caused a search for less costly alternatives.

Under the old formula owners were being offered a subsidy of Lm22,000 towards an estimated cost of Lm35,000 of a new bus. During the last year, specifications were

changed towards low-floor buses, with a resultant hike in costs to Lm55,000.

Bus owners have been lobbying for an increase in subsidy, but it is known the new Government has only allocated Lm100,000 towards the cost of the first five UK-built vehicles in the current financial year.

Although the official reason given for the

rethink seems to be questions of the vehicles' suitability to the operating terrain, the PTA is understood to be looking at cheaper alternatives, including local assembly of new vehicles.

Local press reports quote other alternatives as importation of cheaper vehicles from non-European countries or negotiating a lower price for low floors.

CBW



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ALIZEE**

49 seats + crew seat, centre sunken toilet, servery,
fridge, continental door, radio PA cassette,
double glazed, blinds to side windows. (lap type) seat belts. **Choice**

1991 (H) VOLVO B10M MKIII 273 BHP (TELMA) VAN HOOL ALIZEE

53 seats and crew seat, radio PA cassette, double glazed, blinds to side
windows, (lap type) seat belts. **Choice**

1990 (G) VOLVO B10M MKIII 273 BHP (TELMA) VAN HOOL ALIZEE

53 seats and crew seat, radio PA cassette, double glazed, blinds to side
windows, (lap type) seat belts. **Choice**

**1994 (M) VOLVO B12R –
TELMA – JONCKHEERE
MONACO Ref: V1316/C**

71 seats and crew seat, air
conditioning, toilet,
servery, video/TV/radio PA
cassette, double glazed,
alloy wheels, (lap type)
seat belts, **low mileage**



**1989 (PP) MAN 16.290
HOOL (TELMA) –
JONCKHEERE
DEAUVILLE Ref: M1334/C.**

49 seats and crew seat,
centre sunken toilet,
servery, fridge,
continental door, radio
PA cassette, TV, video,
double glazed



**1992 (J) SETRA
TORNADO 215HD**

MAN engine, ZF 7 speed
gearbox, 49 reclining
seats and courier seat,
sunken centre toilet, 2 TV
monitors and video,
radio/PA system,
repainted white and
retrimmed



1995 (M) SCANIA K113 CENTURY

49 seats, drivers bunk, comfort shift, gearbox, double
glazing, radio/PA system, fridge, TV/video, rear sunken
toilet, rear continental door

**1989 (F & G) LEYLAND
TIGER Ref: L1276/C**

55 seats + 24 standing,
livery white, Alexander
Belfast service
bus body, Cummins L10,
ZF automatic gearbox,
livery white
Choice of 3



**1990 (G) LEYLAND
PLAXTON TIGER 3200**

Ref: L1389/C
50 reclining seats, 6 speed
ZF gearbox, double
glazed, toilet, radio/PA
system, drinks servery,
white livery



1988 (F) DENNIS JAVELIN DUPLÉ 320 Ref: D1385/C

53 reclining seats, 6 speed ZF manual gearbox, brown
moquette, power door (two retrimmed)

Choice of 3

1989 (G) DAF SB2300 VAN HOOL ALIZEE Ref: D1391/C

51 reclining seats, double glazed, drivers bunk, centre toilet, radio/PA
system 2 X TV's, livery white

**1992 (J) VOLVO B10M
MKIII VAN HOOL ALIZEE**

Ref: V1351/C
49 reclining seats, ZF 6
speed S690 manual
gearbox, 1/2 rear
emergency door, centre
continental exit door,
radio/PA system, centre
mounted toilet,
centre servery. **Choice**



1984 (PP) LEYLAND PLAXTON TIGER 3200

49 reclining seats, semi-automatic gearbox, power door, toilet,
radio/PA system, TV, drinks, livery white

**1988 (PP) DAF LAG
PANORAMIC Ref: S1332/CIF**

49 recliner seats, 6 speed
manual gearbox, livery two
tone/white, centre
continental door, double
glazed, drivers bunk, toilet,
radio/PA system, drinks
unit, fridge, curtains



1982 (W) SETRA S215H

53 seats + crew seat, rear continental door, drivers bunk,
radio/PA system, white livery, interior brown/orange trim

1983 (PP) MAN VAN HOOL ASTRON

57 reclining seats, new Grafitti moquette, twin deck videos, hot drinks
machine, fridge, toilet, 3 drivers bunks, reconditioned engine

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Coach

Prohibitions cause Hills to lose licence

Owner banned for six months by commissioner

HILLS of Hersham, Surrey, has had its O-licence revoked after traffic commissioner, Brigadier Michael Turner found it had received an unacceptably high level of prohibi-

by Mike Morgan

tion notices. Owner Daniel Robert Hill had been called to public inquiry as a consequence of a report from the Vehicle Inspec-

torate following an investigation into maintenance arrangements. He was disqualified from holding a licence for six months.

In January 1992 he had been sent a warning



Hills of Hersham: company could lodge appeal

letter when it was found that no driver defect reporting system was in use and two prohibitions issued.

On further inspection in September 1994 the vehicle examiner found the record keeping unsatisfactory and issued an immediate prohibition, bringing to eight the total number of immediates issued since the licence was granted in December 1989.

In November 1994 the licence was renewed for

one year only and in May 1996 the authorisation renewed for 12 vehicles rather than 20 sought.

Since that time four prohibition notices and four variations had to be issued - including three immediate and two indicating a significant failure in maintenance.

Of 12 annual tests undertaken since the last inquiry, eight were failures.

The company has until 11 March to lodge an appeal.

CBW

Have-a-go gran rewarded

NATIONAL Express has rewarded a South Wales OAP, who went to the rescue of one of its drivers who was being attacked, with free coach travel for life.

Barbara Cook, 68, of Radyr, on the outskirts of Cardiff was hailed as the 'have-a-go gran' when she went to the defence of driver Martin Bulley from Plymouth.

Mr Bulley was under attack from a

thug and Mrs Cook started hitting and kicking the assailant until help arrived.

The incident took place last March when Mrs Cook was travelling to Lincoln to visit her son.

Mrs Cook, who suffers from arthritis, insisted that she had not been brave. "The driver was being hit. I hit the assailant, but fortunately, he didn't hit me back," she said.

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UK

Setting seaside scene

SEASIDE holidays are popular with coach groups so many resorts will use the British Travel Trade Fair to update operators on developments and innovations.

Bournemouth, which pioneered 'no smoking' beaches, is now introducing Kidzzone beaches, where youngsters wear coloured ID bands so they can be spotted and returned to their parents if they wander off.

In Southend-on-Sea, work has started on redevelopment of the Kursaal site into an entertainment complex. This will feature a 30-lane bowling centre, roller-skating rink and 'fun casino.'

Thanet District Council will have details of major redevelopment in Margate and Ramsgate. The multi-million pound refurbishment of Margate's seafront includes a boulevard-style seafront road, a new promenade and improved beach access. The blueprint for the Ramsgate Renaissance scheme involves a new ferry terminal

and Amazonia, a retail and entertainment complex. A further £26 million is to be spent on the Ramsgate Harbour approach road and more coach parking facilities.

Staff on the Whitley Bay and Tynemouth stand will be promoting a new sightseeing tour, which

Direct, a one-stop booking service for accommodation, shows and attractions. The new £2 million Spaceshot ride is scheduled to open in Blackpool Pleasure Beach by June.

Morecambe is doubling the size of its stand to give extra space to hoteliers specialising in the coach market. Trevor White, marketing officer for Morecambe Bay Tourism, said: "We see BTTF as the cornerstone of our dealings with the coach trade and are looking forward to meeting operators."

British Travel Trade Fair '97 takes place on Wednesday and Thursday, 19 and 20 March, in Hall 9 at the NEC, Birmingham. It is organised by Reed Exhibition Companies on behalf of the English, Northern Ireland, Scottish and Wales Tourist Boards, and the British Tourist Authority.

Free tickets are available by calling the BTTF ticket hotline on 01926 435843 (fax 01926 451963).

TPS first-time exhibitor

TRAVELLERS Protection Services (TPS) is exhibiting for the first time and will have details of its Group Travel Plan, which provides insurance cover for travel in the UK and abroad. More than 300 coach operators already use TPS's coach schemes and visitors who want to find out why should go to stand 421 for more information.

takes in Hexham, Hadrian's Wall, Otterburn Woollen Mill and a boat trip on Keilder Water.

Blackpool Borough Council is gearing up for the 1997 Illuminations by announcing details of a permanent, dedicated coach compound with 24-hour security cover. The resort is also launching Blackpool

UK

New

Now it's American

SUBSTANTIAL discounts for groups and improved facilities for drivers are to form part of a campaign to attract more coach business to the American Adventure Theme park.

The Derbyshire attraction has been bought from Granada by Ventureworld, a consortium of businessmen, for an undisclosed sum. To mark the change of ownership, the park is to be renamed American Adventure World for the new season, which opens on 22 March.

A Coach Operators' Plan is being formulated for the new season, which will feature an all-inclusive price with substantial dis-



UK

Murder mystery evening at Swallow

MYSTERY was on the menu when the Swallow Hotels travel trade team hosted a murder mystery evening for more than 40 Scottish coach operators, ground handlers and tour operators at the Swallow Hotel, Dundee. Pictured getting in the

party mood are (from left) Bill Ball, of Tours and Travel Promotions; Catherine Graham, of Swallow Hotels; Toni McPherson, of the Dundee and Angus Tourist Board; and Mrs Johnny Ball, of Tours and Travel Promotions.

UK

Themed Breaks

SHEARINGS Holidays has launched a Themed Breaks programme which it claims is the first available nationally through the retail travel trade.

The 15,000 capacity programme is split into a 12-page edition for the north west of England, the east of England and the Midlands,

and a six-page edition for the south.

Both offer a lead-in price of £69 for a two-day package to see Summer Holiday in Birmingham. The package includes half-board accommodation and a shopping excursion.

Other features are

Europe

VI '100' certificates

THE Vehicle Inspectorate is now able to issue certificates which allow coaches with ABS to travel at 100 k/ph in France.

Inspection and certificate cost £20 including VAT.

Operators must complete an application form called Vitesse 100 - the VI form reference number is PSVV1.

Pending completion

of the VI's computer upgrade, all applications should be sent to: PSV Section, Welcome House, 91/92 The Strand, Swansea SA1 2DH.

● Austrian Vignettes are available in advance from OSEG (Austria) - tel 00 43 662 62 05 11 ext 61 or from IPG (Germany) - tel 00 49 703 16 23 00. Alternatively use border fuel stations or customs posts.

name, new campaign

Adventure World

by William Golden

counts for group organisers. Drivers will benefit from improved facilities and concessions.

Clare Miles, marketing manager, said: "Coach operators and drivers will be our top priority and we will be talking to them immediately."

"We believe we can deliver a customer-driven day out that will be both profitable to the operator and easy on the drivers. We are prepared to try out a few novel ideas and listen to the trade."

Ventureworld has major investment plans for the theme park, which already boasts Europe's



Making tracks: new rides are planned at American Adventure World

largest and fastest wild rapids ride and the biggest drop of any log flume in the world.

American Adven-

ture World will open daily from 10am until the end of the season on 2 November. It is planning a programme of special events,

including late-night openings.

It attracted more than 600,000 visitors in 1996.

programme 'first' by Shearings

laser symphony and promenade concerts, flower shows, and three-day Heartbeat, Peak Practice and Coronation Street TV theme packages.

The northern edition also offers two European Garden Breaks - Belgium Holland and the Bulbfields, and Monet's Garden. Both are

priced at £139 to include three night's accommodation, return ferry crossing, and entrance to attractions.

All packages include return coach travel using Shearings' feeder network, which offers up to 1,000 joining points across the UK.

The launch of the pro-

gramme follows significant growth of the themed breaks market and Shearings' own success with other themed products in its UK and European holiday brochures.

Melvyn Morley, themed breaks commercial director, said: "Logistically, it is quite an achievement. By

plugging into our feeder network when it is operational for mainstream holidays, we are able to offer stays of as little as two days at attractive prices.

"With this brochure, we aim to grab a bigger slice of what is an expanding market."

CBW

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● Find out about new group deals and initiatives at this year's BTTF

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● Take a tip on getting the best out of excursions to Bath

● Have your fill of some healthy options for meal breaks on tours

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Eurowatch

WEATHER

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Amsterdam	6C/43F	Madrid	14C/57F
Athens	12C/54F	Oslo	0F/32F
Berlin	6C/43F	Paris	8C/46F
Brussels	7C/45F	Rome	17C/63F
Dublin	12C/54F	Stockholm	1C/34F
Lisbon	15C/59F	Vienna	7C/45F
Luxembourg	4C/39F	Zurich	6/43F

DIESEL PRICES

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
Austria	0.56	Luxembourg	0.43
Belgium	0.56	Netherlands	0.55
Eire	0.54	Norway	0.72
France	0.52	Portugal	0.46
Germany	0.50	Spain	0.48
Greece	0.42	Sweden	0.65
Italy	0.61	Switzerland	0.64

(Courtesy AA Roadwatch)

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	18.52 Sch/£	Italy	2,654 Lire/£
Belgium	54.25 BFr/£	Netherlands	2.96 Gld/£
Denmark	10.08 K/£	Norway	10.56 Nkr/£
Eire	0.99 Punt/£	Portugal	265.40 Es/£
France	8.87 F/£	Spain	223.20 Pta/£
Germany	2.63 DM/£	Sweden	11.77 Skr/£
Greece	417 D/£	Switzerland	2.29 Sfr/£

▼ Drivers' Hours

Balmoral fined total of £800



A SERIES of tachograph offences led to Philip Roberts, trading as Balmoral Coaches, being ordered to pay fines and costs totalling £900 by Liverpool Stipendiary Magistrate Stephen Ward.

Mr Roberts, of Unit 1, Regal Works, St Johns Road, Liverpool, pleaded guilty to six offences of using a vehicle when the tachograph was not used in accordance with the regulations in that the driver failed to use a record sheet, and to one offence of failing to ensure a driver returned tachograph charts to him within 21 days.

Prosecuting for the Vehicle Inspectorate, Richard Green said the driver involved in the offences, Christopher Warn, had appeared before the magistrates in December. Mr Warn, of Fazakerley, Liverpool, had pleaded guilty to six offences of falsifying tachograph charts, one offence of failing to return tacho-

'Mr Roberts had been desperately trying to save the business, and the result was he was not as strict as he should have been over tacho charts'

graph charts within 21 days, two offences of taking insufficient daily rest and five offences of failing to use a tachograph in accordance with the regulations. Mr Warn had been fined £200 for one of the falsification offences, with no separate penalty being imposed in relation to the other matters, and he was ordered to pay £100 prosecution costs.

The facts were that a coach driven by Mr Warn had been stopped and inspected outside the Gladstone Hotel in July, said Mr Green. There was a chart in the tachograph on which no traces were recorded. Further investigations revealed the other offences. On each occasion Mr Warn had not used a chart after departing from base until he had picked up his party of passengers. There were also one or two allegations that Mr Warn had



'No suggestion of any widespread practice among drivers'

withdrawn the chart from the tachograph before the end of his working day so it did not show he had exceeded the permitted driving hours. When interviewed about the matter, Mr Roberts had made no comment.

There was an obligation on every operator to inspect the charts produced by the drivers to ensure they were keeping within the EC drivers' hours and tachograph rules, said Mr Green. In this case, discrepancies had not been drawn to the drivers' attention and Mr Warn had not been given any warnings.

Defending, Philip Grant said that, at the time of the offences, Mr Roberts had been operating about 20 coaches, the bulk of which were employed on school contracts. He had been employing around 20 staff and there was no suggestion that the other drivers had been involved in similar offences. Mr Warn had not informed Mr Roberts he had been stopped and the visit from the traffic examiner came as a complete surprise. Mr Warn had worked for Mr Roberts for nine years and there had never been any previous problems.

There was no suggestion of any widespread practice among Mr Robert's drivers and it appeared to be an isolated incident, said Mr Grant. There was no suggestion from the prosecution that Mr Roberts had aided and abetted Mr Warn in the falsification of tachograph records. Mr Roberts accepted he should have checked Mr Warn's charts but he "took his eye off the ball." In July of last year the business hit severe trading difficulties after losing school contracts and it had been losing £10,000 a month.

Mr Roberts had been desperately trying to save the business, and the result was he was not as strict as he should have been over drivers handing in tachograph charts. Six

vehicles had been sold and Mr Roberts had now instituted measures he hoped would prevent any recurrence of such offences. The drivers had been given training and they now had to hand their tachograph charts in every Monday. As far as Mr Roberts was aware, there had been no further difficulties. Mr Warn had left Mr Roberts' employ, resigning shortly after being interviewed by the traffic examiner in October.

Mr Roberts felt he had probably made a trading loss last year, said Mr Grant. However, he felt

Mr Ward said he considered the whole cause of Mr Robert's problem here was that he was trying to run the business on a shoestring

that the sale of some vehicles had probably just brought him back into the black.

Fining Mr Roberts a total of £800, and ordering him to pay £100 prosecution costs, Mr Ward said he considered that the whole cause of Mr Robert's problem here was that he was trying to run the business on a shoestring.

A 20-vehicle business needed proper systems and management and sufficient capital. The serious aspect of the case was that, if proper tachograph records were not kept, it was impossible to see if the drivers were complying with the drivers' hours rules. It was a serious matter. However, there was just one driver involved, and he had been keeping records for part of the time.

Mr Ward directed that the fines and costs be paid within six weeks.

▼ Maintenance

FirstBus licence

But commissioner tells



CONCERN over the condition of buses being operated by FirstBus subsidiary GCT has led to the number of buses the company is allowed to operate being cut from 150 to 120.

But commenting on the 'quality partnership' entered into by FirstBus and the City of Glasgow, Scottish traffic commissioner Michael Betts said: "I have confidence that FirstBus will sort the situation out and I hope the City of Glasgow will not allow today's hearing to shake its confidence in the partnership it has entered into with FirstBus."

The company had been called before Mr Betts in Glasgow because of concern it was failing to maintain its buses in a fit and road-worthy condition. GCT operated 133 buses from depots at Knightswood, Possilpark, Parkhead and Larkfield. The company is part of Strathclyde Bus Holdings which was taken over by FirstBus plc in June of last year. The other companies in the group are Strathclyde Buses and Kelvin Central Buses.

DoT vehicle examiner Alan Campbell said that, since April 1993, a total of 30 immediate and 17 delayed prohibitions had been imposed on GCT buses. Thirty eight of the prohibition notices had been issued in the last 15 months. Among the defects found were chassis corrosion, a tyre completely devoid of tread with cords exposed over a six-inch tread area; loose propshaft bolts; power steering, oil and fuel leaks; a passenger door which could not be operated from the driver's cab; and spring to axle bolts not fully secure. Three buses were found with excessive oil contamination of the air brake system.

"When brake systems are contaminated with oil, nobody knows when the brakes are going to fail," said Mr Campbell.

In one case, where part of the chassis was found to be crumbling away, Mr Campbell said: "The metal was initially penetrated by an inspection hammer. It was noted that the hammer easily passed

subsidiary GCT has its authorisation cut by 30

Glasgow council not to be concerned about Quality Partnership

by Michael Jewell

through what should have been solid metal and finger pressure could then be used to expand the hole."

Managing director John McCormick said 10 new buses had been purchased in January and nine one-year-old vehicles were being introduced into the fleet, having been transferred from another FirstBus subsidiary.

FirstBus was making a very large investment into engineering, with some £26.8 million having been committed to its three subsidiaries.

He had personally made all employees aware of their concern, with the catch phrase: "If in any doubt, the bus does not go out." He believed that every single employee had got the message.

Mr McCormick claimed a large number of GCT buses had been checked by DoT vehicle examiners without any defects being found.

The commissioner said his concern was that, to an extent, he had heard it all before. There had been a lot of concern about the condition of GCT buses at the end of 1994 and similar assurances were given. He appreciated it was now different management, but his concern was the safety of buses and not who owned them.

Asked what had gone wrong, engineering director Archie Nelson said it was a very difficult question to answer.

Prior to the takeover people were worried about their jobs and, when FirstBus came in, it had very differ-

'If, in a year, the VI is satisfied real improvements have been made, I will be happy to increase authorisation'
— Michael Betts

ent management techniques. He could not put his finger of what had gone wrong.

For GCT, solicitor Michael Whiteford pointed out it was less than a year since FirstBus had taken over. Cutting the authorisation on

GCT's licence, Mr Betts said he did not question in any way FirstBus' intent and ability to bring GCT up to standard. However, for any bus company to have 17 per cent of its buses found to have safety-critical defects was appalling. The company's fleet was still unsatisfactory and the problems were not behind them. The pressure had to be maintained. Despite the many steps taken, the results were still not up to scratch.

"I now want to see that management is effective," said the commissioner. "If, in a year, the Vehicle Inspectorate is satisfied real improvements have been made, I will be happy to increase the authorisation."

■ Full report in *Legal News* in a forthcoming issue

CBW



Concern GCT was failing to maintain buses in fit and roadworthy condition

▼ Maintenance

New licence is granted to Pagoda



PAGODA Travel Ltd has been granted a new two-vehicle O-licence enabling it to take over the business previously run by Mohan Singh Sandhu in his own name.

The company, of 31 Portland Drive, Willen, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, had been called before Eastern traffic commissioner Compton Boyd at a Cambridge public inquiry because of the previous history of Mr Sandhu, who was nominated as the company's transport manager in its application for a standard licence.

Last July one of the two vehicles authorised to Mr Sandhu, trading as Pagoda Travel, was suspended for a fortnight and his application to change the nature of the licence from restricted to standard national was refused.

In granting the company a national licence, Brigadier Boyd made it conditional upon the surrender of Mr Sandhu's licence.

▼ Maintenance

Four to one cut for Lush



COACH operator Richard Lush's O-licence authorisation has been cut from four vehicles to one at a Cambridge disciplinary inquiry.

Mr Lush, of 47 Wellington Street, Luton, Bedfordshire, appeared before Eastern traffic commissioner Brigadier Compton Boyd because of concern about his maintenance arrangements and his financial standing.

The commissioner was told Mr Lush had breached a condition on his licence in that he had failed to notify the Traffic Area of a change in his maintenance arrangements.

After examining financial evidence produced, Brigadier Boyd said he was satisfied Mr Lush met the requirement to be of appropriate financial standing.

▼ Drivers' Hours

Cantabrica's judgement was flawed says commissioner...

...and this led to a number of breaches of the drivers' hours and tachograph rules

IN cutting Cantabrica Coaches Ltd's O-licence authorisation from 23 to 10 vehicles for three months (CBW, 22 February), Eastern traffic commissioner Brigadier Compton Boyd has concluded that a number of breaches of the drivers' hours and tachograph rules had arisen out of the company's flawed judgement.

The commissioner's decision follows the appearance of the company, of 146-148 London Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, at a two-day disciplinary inquiry in Cambridge in January.

Brigadier Boyd had considered taking action against Cantabrica's licence following the conviction of four of its drivers in September 1995 of offences of failing to take sufficient daily and weekly rest, and of the company itself in March 1996 of offences of failing to produce tachograph charts and permitting a driver to fail to take sufficient weekly rest, for which Cantabrica was fined a total of £3,000.

Reference was also made to a statement of a traffic examiner who had travelled on holiday on one of the company's coaches in which he claimed that, on the return journey, the driver had fallen asleep at the wheel three times. The Vehicle Inspectorate claimed to have found other drivers' hours and tachograph offences which were not laid before the magistrates, either because they were out of time or because they had taken place on the Continent where there was no jurisdiction. A traffic examiner visited the company again in September and October of last year and found from their records that various offences had been committed on mainland Europe during July and August 1996 by its drivers (CBW, 25 January).

Brigadier Boyd said that, in 1994, the Vehicle Inspectorate's suspicions were aroused following the report concerning the driver

by Michael Jewell

who had fallen asleep at the wheel, the uncovering of two false tachograph records, and reports from other traffic examiners who felt the company's drivers were not as co-operative as they might have been. From that time forth relations between the company and the Vehicle Inspectorate became progressively more sour and there was mutual suspicion. For example, Cantabrica's managing director David Stewart had hinted rather darkly at the public inquiry that some tachograph records had been mislaid or lost after being handed over by the company. It was per-

Court in the Van Swieten case. The company pleaded guilty to five specimen charges of failing to produce tachograph charts and to permitting a driver to take insufficient rest. Four of its drivers were also convicted of a series of drivers' hours offences with fines ranging from £150 to £200, with one driver being given an absolute discharge. The seriousness of these convictions, in operator licensing terms, was underlined by the fact the company failed to fulfil a statement of intent, now an undertaking, thought important enough for it to be enshrined in the application form for an O-licence. Moreover, because of the nature of the

inevitably throw up problems from time to time and, in recognition of that, some flexibility should have been built into the system.

For that reason, he believed the company's judgement was flawed, taking, for example, the incident concerning the driver falling asleep at the wheel, an event which certainly should have prompted the company to reconsider the nature of its scheduling. There was a further disturbing feature to that case. The tachograph records had never been produced. The continuing failure to be able to demonstrate that those involved in 'feeder' services were operating within the regulations was another example of, at best, flawed judgement. The company's actions had also caused him to question its integrity, said Brigadier Boyd.

In relation to the alleged offences that arose after the Van Swieten judgment, the company accepted that things had gone wrong, resting the blame on the then transport manager, although it was accepted he should have been better supervised. Following the investigations of 1994 and 1995, the subsequent convictions, and the clarification of the regulations, it was quite inexcusable that these offences should have been allowed to happen and it made him suspect that this had been an operator who regarded its responsibilities towards the licensing system as secondary to its commercial interests.

He was drawn to the conclusion that, up to that time that was so. However, there now seemed to have been a shift of policy and that had led to a radical review of the management structure, scheduling and procedures. The changes also included the lessening of demands that the holiday company had placed on its sister transport organisation. That seemed to him to be a most significant step in that it heralded a long overdue shift in emphasis.

CBW



Eastern traffic commissioner Brigadier Compton Boyd concluded that reputations had been greatly tarnished. Though not lost, it had been a close shave.

Cantabrica has 13 vehicles suspended

Three-month authorisation cut over drivers' hours and tachograph convictions

by Michael Jewell
 Cantabrica Coaches Ltd's O-licence being suspended for three months following the conviction of four of its drivers in September 1995 of offences of failing to take sufficient daily and weekly rest, and of the company itself in March 1996 of offences of failing to produce tachograph charts and permitting a driver to fail to take sufficient weekly rest, for which Cantabrica was fined a total of £3,000.

Cantabrica: actions caused commissioner to question integrity

haps not a coincidence that these problems occurred around the time in 1994 when Cantabrica, acting upon advice, rescheduled its operations to match a more flexible interpretation of the various regulations concerning both the 'feeder' and the 'shuttle' services, an interpretation which the Vehicle Inspectorate considered was not in the best interests of road safety. This issue, however, had nothing to do with the company's failure to produce record sheets, a matter which led to various convictions. Nor could the company be excused for any failure to observe, subsequently, those regulations whose interpretation had been clarified by the judgment of the European

offences, they raised questions as to the company's reputation.

In relation to the alleged offences which took place in or before October 1994, the company sought to explain them away by claiming that they were, in the main, the product of its reinterpretation of the regulations. However, it did accept that was not exclusively the case.

It seemed to him, said Brigadier Boyd, the company's interpretation of the regulations was so 'creative' it left little or no room for manoeuvre when problems arose. It should have been self-evident to any responsible and realistic operator that the complex nature of the movements would

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M.O.T. JULY 1997

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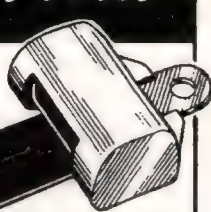
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IN a departure from usual practice, the questions on this page have not been posed by operators, but are general points that often perplex those who are considering costing and pricing in the coach and bus industry.

Q Should you use the depreciation figure in the past year's accounts in costings, or is it better to project it forward to the current year?

a Neither! As well as being out of date, figures in accounts represent no more than accountancy practice, having regard to principles acceptable to Inland Revenue. They have little correlation to the true value of the vehicle or the effect of inflation and market influences on the cost of replacing the vehicle. I have always believed it is more satisfactory to make an assessment of depreciation and replacement based on the 'real value' changes over a year. The essential point about depreciation funding is to be able to replace like with like when changing coaches.

By way of example: it may be possible to sell a coach that cost £60,000 10 years ago for £40,000 today but, if depreciation costing has only generated a fund equal to the drop in value, you might well need another £60,000 to buy a £120,000 replacement.

Had you been able to foresee this 10 years ago you could have made provision in costings to cover the entire £80,000 difference between the value of the old vehicle and the price of the new one. On a 'straight line' method this would be £8,000 per year.

It is important to assess, in real terms, from year to year, whether the provision made is sufficient and whether the profits made have, in fact, enabled that provision to have been generated. If the provision is too high, prices will be needlessly uncompetitive but, if it is insufficient or not achieved, the long-term viability of the business will be undermined.

Q Why bother with all this costing business? Isn't it easier to just add a percentage to last year's prices?

a It would be a job to know what percentage to use. RPI would not even cover the effect of the 25 per cent rise in fuel prices over the last year. In many areas pressures on recruitment have forced wage rates to rise above inflation and the percentage increase in spares prices is anyone's guess. Plucking percentage figures out of the sky is dangerous. Get it too low and profits would fall. Going too high would make it harder to secure bookings.

There is another good reason to start from basic costings: to discover the actual costs of each section of a mixed business and what increases (or possibly even decreases) there have been in each particular cost item. For example: changes in the way that excursions and tours are sold might radically alter advertising and publicity spending.

On the other hand, a substantial switch to



Questions & Answers

peak-hour contract working could considerably lower overall vehicle utilisation and thus necessitate the peak-hour working bearing a greater part of the standing charges than may have been previously the case.

Unless each area of operation is correctly costed there is a very real risk of profits from one activity being unwittingly used to subsidise losses made in another.

Q Should wages be regarded as a standing (or fixed) cost, or a running (variable) cost?

a The traditional view is that wages are a standing cost but that is based on the assumption that wages and salary costs will not vary with the volume of work done. In the case of directors, managers and, to some extent, engineering staff, this may be so. On the other the costs of employing drivers may well vary according to work levels. My advice is really that it does not really matter which heading these sort of costs appear under - as long as the allowance made for them adequately reflects the true cost

Questions on coach and bus operation should be sent to:
Marksman, c/o Coach and Bus Week, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS or fax 01733 467154

Marksman will answer more questions after publication of his 1997 pricing tables

of employment (plus profit margin) having regard to the particular circumstances.

Q Tour operators always want a price per day to cover virtually any mileage. Why are the CBW pricing tables made up of time and mileage elements?

a Because not all coach operators are working all the time for tour operators! You would not win much local work, with low mileages involved, by working on a daily rate which covers the running of relatively high distances. It is beyond doubt that the duration of a hire and the distance involve vastly different costs and consequently the need to recover them as nearly as possible through a price structure that reflects those costs. Few, if any, customers would want a price expressed in time and mileage terms - they only want a single figure. Time and distance are the means of getting to the correct single figure. Working for, or quoting, tour operators is really not that much different to any other customer: an assessment needs to be made of the mileage involved, albeit on an averaged daily basis, and added to the time-based costs to give a daily rate.

Q Is it unrealistic to try to push prices higher and higher all the time? Surely customers simply will not pay the price we really need?

a It is also unrealistic to work at a loss and ultimately go out of business. Rather than go blindly on that suicide route, if you want to limit price increases, seek to reduce costs. Look at everything from bank charges and interest payments to the price of fuel and stationery supplies.

Renegotiation of deals, competitive purchasing tactics and perhaps buying in greater bulk (or, in some cases, by stocking less) can reduce costs. Either by improving driver utilisation or renegotiation of how wages are structured, seek to avoid paying drivers to stand around doing nothing between spells of chargeable work. The same may be applicable to garage staff. Coach and bus operators, because of bad planning and self-generated panic needs, often have not left themselves time for these good housekeeping measures.

Almost without doubt the real key to reducing the effect of costs on pricing, and thus prices themselves, is to increase vehicle utilisation. This dilutes the effect of the standing charges across more work. Achieving this is likely to involve concentration on better marketing and selling tactics, perhaps to develop new areas of activities.

While I have considerable empathy with the philosophy that says "It doesn't go out of the garage other than at the right price" that should not be an excuse for inactivity. The operators who are making the best profits have done everything in their power to increase vehicle utilisation. Waiting inactively for work to come of its own accord, at the right prices, is not a realistic option any more - if it ever was.

CBW



Dig the train, shame about the trousers...

Vehicles yes, clothes no

NATIONAL Express launched a new image for its Midland Mainline rail franchise on the first of 13 refurbished HSTs.

And who did it turn to for the racy orange and green livery? None other than Ray Stenning of Best

Impressions. Ray forged his reputation in the coach and bus industry and says the design principles for a train are just the same: "It's a moving vehicle," he said.

Not that we'd argue with Ray's undoubted ability to give a slab-sided

vehicle an eye-catching modern image.

However, we're not sure we could say the same about his taste in trousers.

Let's hope they don't become the inspiration for his next scheme for a 'moving vehicle'.

Cycle lanes, yes, but this is going too far

WHILE the provision of cycle lanes in general should be applauded, it seems these environmentally-friendly conveyances can take precedence over even pedestrians wishing to use public transport.

In prosperous Tunbridge Wells, the inclusion of this cycle lane - using much of the footpath rather than part of the road - has created this decidedly strange bus stop arrangement.

Intending passengers waiting at the shelter have to step across the lane to a small pedestrian island by the kerb edge. If there were a number of passengers and perhaps pushchairs it would indeed be a tight fit.



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Tunbridge Wells: you can bike it, bus it, but don't try walking it

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Coach and Bus Week ending March 1 1997

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Buying new vehicles, not retro-fitting, the answer

From Gary Dixon

I was most upset to read *CBW's* suggested letter to news editors (*CBW*, 8 February). Facts and figures relating to seatbelt statistics of the past have no meaning to the general public who, after all, hire our coaches on an ongoing basis.

If the modern-day coach operator invests in new coaches, as I have done, they have seatbelts that have been proven in the design of the coach, also crash tested and certified from new. To gain a Certificate of Initial Fitness in 1996, as opposed to 1986, is much more difficult.

As you can gather from

this letter, I think the opinion of the general public and the standards of my company dictate totally against retro-fitting.

With reference to the article about my company (*CBW*, 25 May 1996), I have invested in a fleet of coaches valued at over £1 million. I have been dealing with large coaches for two years. However, there are a lot of coach companies who have been in the business for a lot longer, who could easily do the same as me and, at the end of the day, I went out to get the work after the purchase had been made.

I would like to know what coach companies who

are operating older coaches are going to do on 10 February 1998.

I would suggest they set up their garages as Severn Valley Railway did with steam trains and open them for the tourists.

Modern-day coach operators should be keeping up the same image that Euro Star has been creating since 1995. This would enable us to recoup all the investment put in and enable the manufacturers, suppliers and service industries to benefit as well.

Gary Dixon
Executive Travel
Wednesfield
Wolverhampton

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Keep those letters rolling in. If requested, we will publish them anonymously, but always include your full name (ie, first name and surname), address and telephone number



CORGI
CLASSICS

Letter of the week
wins a Corgi
Classics model bus

Aspirational scheme

From Eric Hall

In response to a written question put forward to the Directorate-General VII of the European Commission in the magazine *Commission en Direct* number 40 of 16/22 January 1997, a most interesting reply was proposed.

First, it was explained that, some time during the next six months, it hopes to have established a common front among the 15 members for the introduction of a new tachograph which (it hopes) will make falsifying records much more difficult. "About time," most realistic drivers will reply, but I am waiting to be convinced as, indeed, I am waiting to hear exactly who is going to have to pay for purchasing and installing all the necessary equipment. Are we also going to see yet another attempt to fit tachographs in all vehicles with more than eight seats?

And for those of you who were breathing sighs of relief that the 48-hour working week was not going to be applied to workers in the mobile transport industry well, think again, because the commission is proposing shortly to publish a White Paper on the subject. You may well wonder exactly what are the implications of this, and how you are going to be affected, so read on.

Firstly, I have yet to meet a coach driver who has worked less than 48 hours per week. I don't just mean driving, but loading and unloading, washing out and cleaning, fuelling up and so on, and 'hanging around'.

If a driver is limited to only 48 hours

working, well, work it out for yourself, how much of their weekly routine will they have to miss out on? And don't just think "good riddance", because it's all going to have to be done and this is where it really is going to bite.

Those drivers who are accustomed to their usual tour all alone will now find that either their routine is going to be cut down drastically, or (even worse) they will find a second driver with them.

In the first case, the passengers will be really upset, and in the second case, when the passengers have to pay an extra £25 or £30 per holiday to cover the second driver's expenses, they will be really upset. And who will get the flak?

And even worse, those drivers who work for a few certain northern coach operators (no names mentioned) who are used to making up their 19th Century wages on their travels are really going to suffer when they have to divide everything by two. And how many drivers are going to be needed to do a shuttle to Spain or Italy?

Secondly, can anyone really see operators willing to maintain the present ridiculous wage rates when they see the driver's work being cut by two?

And where are all these necessary additional drivers going to come from? This may be good news for the unemployment statistics but I'm sure we can all remember what happened to bus services under deregulation in the mid-80s when a rapid recruitment of drivers was required. The standard fell dramatically; accidents and reported cases of bad or downright dangerous driving filled

the national papers for years. And has anyone had the "pleasure" of working with one of these "service" drivers on a coach tour?

I don't blame them personally, because they were never taught like we were, to brush out and wash the coach, to be nice to the passengers etc. Coming from a background of being taught as quickly as possible to get their Sherpa or 1970 Olympian in front of their competitor's Sherpa or 1970 Olympian at all costs it was no surprise. Now, soon enough, the same pressure will be on coach operators to train up staff as quickly as possible to keep the coaches on the road (I can't see any operator starting a programme of training even a day in advance).

Will we, therefore, see the same results in the coaching world as we saw on the buses? The outcome will be exactly the same, with a fall-off of coach passengers which will, in turn, lead to more cars on the road, thus more pollution, more coach drivers receiving even less pay than at present, the reputation of the British coach driver plummeting downhill fast to meet that of his European counterpart, and the destruction of a traditional British industry which has existed unchallenged virtually since Herbert Shearing loaded up his first charabanc in Oldham in 1919.

Eric Hall
Brussels
Belgium

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CBW5



Stagecoach introduced artics on inter-urban routes but how do they fare on urban streets?

BENDI-BUSES or articulated PSVs, call them what you will, have never enjoyed much popularity on these shores. The thinking was why mess around with a bus nearly 60 feet long with three axles, when a double decker will carry the same amount of passengers, in half the length, and more importantly, half the price?

But Mainline in Sheffield has been running 13 Danish-built Leyland-DAB bendi-buses quite happily for the past 10 years and they are as common in Europe and Scandinavia as the double decker is in the UK. But all those in Sheffield are buses, not coaches.

In 1981 Parks of Hamilton ordered a batch of Volvo B10Ms with Duple Goldliner bodywork but they never saw the light of day because of legislation banning all articulated vehicles from the outside lane on three-lane motorways. However, 15 years on, all two-axle coaches are banned from the third lane, so that problem does not arise anymore.

Now Stagecoach Ribble is using these 71-seat 18-metre Volvo B10Ms on the X43 route. They are rated at 286 bhp with ZF five-speed automatic gearbox with integrated integral retarder, and fitted with Plaxton's Premiere 320 Interurban design bodywork. All seats are fitted with seatbelts and there are overhead racks and luggage pens at the front. And all this for around £200,000 each.

Twelve have been delivered to Stagecoach, 10 with Plaxton coachwork and two Jonckheere Mistrals. The Mistrals are with Fife on its Glasgow express routes, and the Plaxton examples will be split between Ribble, East Midland and Fife.

The X43 route stretches from Colne, in the top corner of East Lancashire, close to the North Yorkshire border, through the mill towns of Nelson and Burnley, and crosses the Rossendale Valley to Rawtenstall. Here it joins three miles of dual-carriageway, then on to the M66 and M62. The last leg takes it through the Cheetham Hill suburb of Manchester, past Strangeways Prison, the bomb

What fu the ben

damaged city centre and Chorlton Street bus station, a total of 31 miles, and a journey of 95 minutes.

Trevor Roberts, Ribble operations director, said: "As to the articulated Volvos, it is our intention to use them on the X61 Manchester-Blackpool through March to October and the X43 in the Winter.

"The vehicles are on trial within the Stagecoach Group following impressive loadings on the inter-urban network and the need to provide additional capacity of similar quality."

"The standard return fare is £2.10 which, for a round trip of over 60 miles, is excellent value for money. The service runs every 15 minutes, Monday to Saturday, and hourly in the evening. The service operates as the 743 on Sundays, but additional X43 journeys are operated on Sundays on the weeks preceding Christmas. The artics have not yet been used on the 743, due to Greater Manchester PTE objecting to them using the Bury Interchange on the grounds that, at 18 metres, they are too long to negotiate the entrance. Admittedly, during the week the interchange is quite congested but on Sunday you will be lucky to see more than four buses in at any one time, so what's the problem?"

To sample this 18-metre leviathan, we took the 9.30am from Colne, accompanied for part of the journey by Richard Cranmer, operations manager for east Lancashire, which takes in Clitheroe, Blackburn, Burnley and the recently-acquired Hyndburn.

Mr Cranmer said most drivers had been trained, but there was no dedicated team for the artics. Driver Roy Burns said he found them easy enough to drive and reversing was



Stagecoach artics: around £200,000



Stagecoach introduced articulated coaches with low fares in east Lancashire. Is this just a one-off exercise or is it the way forward? David Barrow investigates

ture for di-bus?

the only problem he had to work on. Although the vehicle is 18 metres long, a short 5.6-metre wheelbase gives a turning circle comparable with a conventional 12-metre two-axle coach. Mr Burns said that, at first, he was forever looking at the video screen above his head, which is linked to a camera in the trailer section surveying the emergency exit.

We left Colne at 9.30am with four passengers on board. Richard Cranmer said the majority of the passengers for Manchester board at Burnley and Rawtenstall. Quite a few passengers commented to the driver en-route about the vehicles.

Burnley bus station has typical nose-in, reverse-out type of stands, and other bus drivers have to be aware of the 'bendi' when coming in to park, with six metres of coach protruding from the line of parked buses.

Mr Burns said he found reversing a bit more of a challenge, especially on this day as a second artic was parked at right angles to us, with not much room for manoeuvre.

Eventually we made the steady climb out of Burnley before levelling off at Dunnockshaw, and then descended through Crawshawbooth, and on to Rawtenstall. This is a busy little town, and the artic had to negotiate the tight twisting streets with its plethora of parked cars, before coming to rest at the Bank Street pick-up point. Rawtenstall is the last stop before the dual-carriageway motorway section.

Rossendale Transport and Firstbus Greater Manchester provide the services to Bury and Manchester using A roads, but most patrons travelling to Manchester will choose the X43, even though Bury has its Metrolink for its link to Man-

chester and beyond.

When we left Rawtenstall we were now almost three-quarters full, mostly with shoppers, but some were connecting with other services at Chorlton Street bus station in the city. Some elderly passengers said they were thankful of the extra capacity, without the need to climb stairs as on double deckers.

The BIOM provided a smooth effortless journey on the 14 miles of dual carriageway and motorway, cruising at the maximum 60 mph for most of the way. The whole unit felt very rigid and taut, with none or very little sideways flicker from the trailer section.

So what future does the artic have?

Barry Hickley for Stagecoach said: "We will be closely monitoring the performance of these new coaches over the coming months to determine just what role they have to play in our operations in the future."

Hugh McAteer, director for Parks of Hamilton, said: "Artic coaches do not figure in our future buying plans, even though they did 16 years ago."

Don Johnson, national coach sales manager for Volvo Bus, said: "Not much interest shown, Bakers Dolphin in Weston made some inquiries but that was all."

A spokesperson for a large Midlands company said:

"They looked ideal for National Express work."

If Stagecoach finds a niche for this type of coach, and orders more, others might follow but, if it decides there is no specific advantage and just keeps what it has, Stagecoach, like Sheffield Mainline and Ulsterbus, will probably remain one of the only operators of articulated PSVs.



Tight squeeze: artics have to cope with narrow streets



Kirkby — a byword for quality and innovation in servicing your total transport solutions

Glynn McKenzie, general manager: brings a wealth of experience way beyond industry standards in dealer management

THE first thing that strikes you as you enter Kirkby's modern facility in South Yorkshire is the full force of enthusiasm and teamwork. The people, a mix of long-established professionals and new recruits, form a powerful group wholly committed to the business of helping the customer and setting new standards in customer care.

Intuitive, experienced and steeped in the industry, they truly understand that, whatever the nature of your own company, maximising profit is only possible if you have exactly the right vehicles and support which suits your needs.

Perhaps being part of the powerful and highly successful Henly Group, market leader by far in the industry, helps but one gets the impression these people just love delighting customers, whatever the product.

Of course, Plaxton has been in the business of developing vehicles which set the standard for quality and value for money for many years. A shining star in the City and performing superbly with recent acquisitions such as Northern Counties in Wigan and the joint Henlys/Volvo purchase of Provost in Canada, this group just goes on getting better and better.

However, Kirkby is much more than a division of Henlys, offering a bewildering array of used coaches with various bodies on all leading brands of chassis, creating a dynamic range of options whatever the size of your order.

If it's new you seek, Kirkby has a full range of Plaxton coach bodies on Volvo B10M, Javelin 245 and GX, all for immediate delivery

QUALITY

Customers are met by Narissa Kirk, sales receptionist, and entering the offices is an experience in itself. The congenial atmosphere and superb showroom are not meant to lull you into a false sense of security! This is very much a "One Stop Shop" where a whole package of services are introduced to you, involving you in the whole purchasing process.

Every vehicle undergoes rigorous pre-delivery valeting and servicing in



Narissa Kirk: a relative newcomer to the company, Narissa is the youngest member of the reception and administration team. First impressions are critical and Narissa is becoming accustomed to her prominent role in the sales process



Experience unlimited: the Kirkby Coach and Bus

A winning

state-of-the-art workshops, and customers are encouraged to view this process firsthand.

COST

While many sales environments can have "fire and forget" philosophies, Kirkby customers represent the lifeblood of the business, where loyalty and commitment come together in

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Kirkby's success, expansion and commitment to customers has led to a demand for increased market presence. As a consequence they are always seeking outstanding sales professionals capable of delivering a coherent business development plan in specific regions of the UK.

You will need to be committed to offering a wide range of customer-focussed options, and be capable of



sales team, with sales manager Mick McElhone

g team!

partnership with you. Of course, the pressures for operators are intense, making the purchase structure a critical element in your decision. Price is one thing but what about whole life cost?

For example, parts cost/availability and service intervals, or resale values when the time comes to replace the vehicle? In addition, these are expensive purchases, tying up cap-

AREA SALES MANAGER

working with a high degree of autonomy in managing your area in terms of profitability and long-term growth.

Results driven, highly credible and a natural business winner, your personality, enthusiasm and approach will be such that you can quickly add value to an accomplished Kirkby sales team.

Experience in commercial vehicle sales is a key component for success, and career development opportunities in a meritocracy will be, quite simply, outstanding.

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ital, so the way you finance the deal is absolutely critical.

Glynn McKenzie, general manager, understands these issues and, with over 36 years in finance and business management, he brings a wealth of experience way beyond industry standards in dealer management

Stuart Smith, manager of Roadlease Finance and Kirkby Rental, heads a team dedicated to the growing demand for short-term rental and seasonal hire, helping customers to maximise market demand. When purchasing, Stuart can arrange a finance package to suit your needs, backed up with the full force of Lombard Business Finance. The low-cost Triple Choice Diamond options are flexible and offer you opportunities to maintain your vehicle range as up to date as possible. In most cases, finances can be arranged quickly and without fuss while you are on site.

INNOVATION

There is no doubt that the industry continues to change dramatically. With competition intensifying, there is a need to add value at every stage of the sales and post sales support so that you take delivery of your vehicle which is ready for action from day one. To achieve this, the business has focussed wholly on providing a service for the whole life of the vehicle, through advanced parts and service operations, keeping you on the road at the lowest cost possible.

Glynn McKenzie drives this philosophy hard and is determined to continue innovating and adding value at every opportunity. His view is that only the truly professional organisation will survive in the future, and every aspect of the process, whether purchasing, renting or financing - and, more importantly, helping to support customers' autonomy long term - is a vital element.

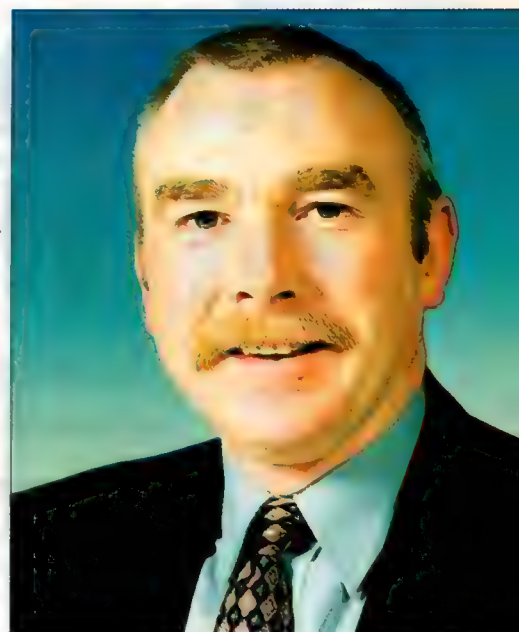
He has spent a considerable amount of time increasing Kirkby's presence in the market and coaches his external sales team in business development and getting to know their customers, wherever they are.

He has also increased activity and committed resources to Ireland and Scotland and, of course, continues to call on the resources of the Henlys Group when required.

To help provide this service and to offer back-up to the sales team, Lindsey Jones has introduced a telemarketing service making sure that Kirkby is in regular contact with its customers. All the facilities Kirkby has on offer at Anston are open to visitors to the Kirkby Spring Show on 3, 4 and 5 March. There is also a chance to see the Plaxton Parts and Service Centre, Bus and Coach Glazing, and the Small Bus Division, along with the many displays by the industry's leading suppliers.

Kirkby, the byword for quality, cost, delivery and innovation in providing total transport solutions.

■ For more information on new/used vehicle chassis options, purchase, rental, hire or financing and general inquiries contact Kirkby Coach and Bus - Sales Reception, on 01909 551166.



Stuart Smith:
heads
Roadlease
Finance and the
growing Kirkby
Rental Division



Lindsey Jones: a familiar face to Expressliner operators, Lindsey has a new role in a pioneering field of telemarketing and customer service/support



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Making the most of their people

Investors in People has allowed Clarkes Coaches to achieve everything it set out to, and more, says quality and management consultant, Peter Everard, in the last part of a four-part series

ATTAINING the Investors standard has allowed Clarkes to achieve everything it set out to achieve initially and more. The company is now confident it has the people and systems to take it through to its next stage of development. Levels of business have been maintained and customer testimonials bear out the quality of the service. The coaching industry is an unknown commodity to lay people; 90 per cent of people do not use coaches. Clarkes, by completing the Investors process, has demonstrated that coach businesses can be run on the same level as other businesses.

As the only "people quality" standard, Investors provides a framework for integrating human resources strategy with business strategy. This allows effective action to maximise the return on the investment made in people. This is of equal importance to any employing organisation, regardless of size, sector, or location. The national standard does not, though, expect employers to approach training and development in the same, or a predetermined way. Investors is a continual process of development and the cyclic framework of 'commitment', 'planning', 'action', and 'evaluation' allows for and respects individual approaches and methods to meet training needs.

The standard ties training needs directly to the long-term aims of the organisation and gives the investment in people a greater focus. It highlights the fact investment is not simply a question of committing more resources to training but of making existing investment work more productively. It helps put a firm value on training. Investors can also provide a company with the opportunity to review current training and development against a good practice benchmark and can provide an accurate audit of current strengths and weaknesses.

Having said the Investors process is not prescriptive, the benefits a company undertaking the procedure can expect to receive are tangible. Working towards achieving the national standard typically:

- Empowers employees to determine their training and development needs. There is a greater willingness to accept new technology; industrial relations are improved due to an awareness of common goals and, therefore, greater job satisfaction; staff turnover and absenteeism are reduced.

- Focuses on the training and development needs

of directors and managers who are working as a team to achieve common goals for the mutual benefit of all employees. All staff are more closely involved in business planning and, therefore, awareness of business objectives among all employees is raised.

- Helps management put greater value on learning time in everyday work experiences.

- Creates the confidence to approach quality assurance such as ISO 9000 (formally BS5750) and Total Quality Management initiatives. As a quality assurance system, ISO 9000 may operate alongside Investors and be mutually beneficial: 90 per cent of the achievement of a company undertaking Investors unavoidably demonstrates the consistency of quality necessary for ISO 9000; operating in reverse; a company cannot offer the best practice of Investors without consistent levels of quality.

- Brings public recognition - by customers, suppliers, shareholders and employees alike for achievements measured against a rigorous national standard.

- Provides evidence of improvements through monitoring and evaluation.

- Brings a new competitive advantage.

The benefits experienced by Clarkes reflect the full capabilities of the Investors framework. It has allowed it to develop a competitive edge to secure future prosperity and to create an improved skill base from which to



A company can expect tangible benefits from Investors

Coach and Bus Week ending 1 March 1997



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Looking for the next challenge: through Investors Clarkes is constantly setting itself higher targets

"Investors helps you set out your goals and reach them and that gives you satisfaction. I've got a clearer idea of where my job's going and the training I need. Since I've been here there's been an enormous change; everybody's got a clearer idea of their role in the company."

Not everyone can see the benefits that investors can offer before they actually embark on the process. Some of the most commonly asked questions are:

Q How will Investors affect my bottom line?

A It will inevitably affect it; if a company is maximising its potential it cannot fail to have a positive effect. In Clarkes' case it exposed a commercial gap in Winter work following a business plan analysis. This led to the introduction of a commercial manager which created a significant improvement to the bottom line.

Q How will Investors help us while we're making a profit already?

A There is always room for improvement and Investors creates improvements in: efficiency, communications, staff participation, awareness and staff relations.

Q Are we too small?

A Investors is beneficial to any organisation, whatever the size or structure, but it is particularly aimed at those companies with more than 10 to 15 employees.

Q What is it going to cost?

A For a company undertaking the process itself, it is a commitment of time and effort until the changes become common practice. If a consultant is brought in via a TEC it will require the same level of commitment and up to 50 per cent of the funding for the work will be met by the Government.

Q Where can we get help?

A Regional help is available directly through the Training and Enterprise Council and from Business Links.

With the guidance of its management consultants ESP (the Everard and Smeeth Partnership) Investors has taught Clarkes a lot about itself. The company now feels poised to move to the next stage. It will be always looking for the next challenge, constantly setting itself a series of higher targets.

As Clarkes' director of personnel and training, Paula Marks, says: "The greatest benefit we have got from Investors is the development of our culture and empowerment of our people leading to continuous improvement in everything we do."

The Everard and Smeeth Partnership provides consultancy support and advice through a number of Government initiatives which include Investors in People, ISO 9000, and Training and Development Management. It further assists with management training, Total Quality Management issues, business planning, and addresses conflict in the workplace. ESP, Peter Everard and Tim Smeeth, are at Northbrook Farmhouse, Micheldever Station, Nr Winchester, Hampshire, SO21 3AJ

expand business objectives:

- Drivers are empowered to take responsibility and do so willingly.
- All staff 'own' their career development and have a full say in appraisal matters.
- Career structures are in place and the company secures the highest-quality recruits.
- All drivers have passed the Institute of Advanced Motorists test and some are now qualifying as IAM instructors.
- NVQ qualifications for drivers are being introduced with internal assessment verification.
- Some drivers are taking basic Japanese lessons to serve better their Japanese tour customers.
- All staff wear the company uniform which creates a sense of belonging and pride.

These positive effects that Investors has brought to Clarkes are widely recognised throughout the company.

Driver Ricky Fletcher said: "It's definitely easier to contribute ideas now through the Drivers' Forum; if you raise a problem, it's in the minutes and by the next meeting it's sorted out. The appraisal system is also very useful because it helps you understand your role within the organisation."

Recently-appointed workshop technician Fred Abercrombie said: "I've only been at Clarkes for a few months and the induction process was very good. It took away the burden of everyday things and gave me an idea of who is responsible for what and where I fit in."

According to personal assistant Christina Ward:



Caetano/MAN collected

BURNS Coaches of Tarves, Ellon, Aberdeen, has collected a new Caetano Algarve II 33-seat coach from Salvador Caetano (UK) Ltd. Mounted on MAN 11.190 rear-engine chassis, the coachwork includes tinted double glazing, rear saloon toilet, cooler box and hot water boiler mounted on the front decency screen, video and monitor



Stonehouse buys Mistral

THIS new Volvo B10M GL fitted with Jonckheere Mistral 50 coachwork has been sold by Yeates to Stonehouse Coaches of Stonehouse. It is equipped with 49/53 seats, centre sunken toilet and centre Continental door, radio/PA/cassette and registered P3 BUS.



Century liveries differ

A PAIR of Scania Century coaches sold by Scania Bus and Coach to C&G Coach Services of Chatteris are in different liveries. C&G runs 16 coaches. Ten are Scania, including four Irizar-built Centurys. Both the new coaches will be used on UK and Continental tours but one is for an exclusive contract with Harrison Holidays.

KIRKBY

Mayne change

Change of direction for north west operator, which needed vehicles offering balance between comfort and capacity

by Mike Morgan

MAYNES of Manchester has added its first Volvos, with two going to its 23-vehicle coach fleet in Manchester and a similar pair going to its 22-strong Barry Cooper fleet in Warrington.

B10M chassis and Plaxton Premiere 55-seat 320 body were selected for these debut Volvos, which were supplied by Kirkby.

General manager, Grady Thompson, explained the change of direction for Mayne. He said: "We run the usual mix of private hires alongside a programme of day excursions and a limited programme of short breaks.

"For this we need coaches which offer the best balance between comfort and

capacity, and the vehicles which Kirkby had to offer filled the bill nicely.

"We have always viewed good fuel economy as important in helping us to manage our costs and this has influenced our choice of vehicles, both buses and coaches. We will closely monitor these Euro 2-engined vehicles to check their performance."

The new Volvos introduce a new look for Mayne's coaches with a bold new fleet-name and revised livery layout. "Image is important in the coach business," said Mr Thompson, "and on these vehicles we've gone for strong use of the company's established red and cream livery which should leave no doubt about whose coaches they are."

AW GROUP

First Scottish operator to

RENNIES, the long-established Dunfermline-based coach and bus operator, is the first operator in Scotland to buy Indcar-bodied Iveco midicoaches.

Supplied by Iveco dealer, the AW Group of Rathby, Leicestershire, the midis also signal a landmark in the company's history and are to be followed by a further trio of Iveco





for Plaxton Premiere/B10Ms



buy Indcar-bodied midis

coaches. A special variation on the Rennie blue and white livery has been designed to mark half a century in business.

However, it will be



restricted to new deliveries.

Expected shortly are three full-size Beulas-bodied Iveco EuroRiders.

Two of the Indcar midis are to 35-seat format, but the third is classed as an executive, being fitted with floor-mounted rear toilet and downseated to 33. Consequently it has a windowless back.

When the EuroRiders arrive, three Plaxton and Van Hool-bodied Volvo B10Ms will leave the fleet as the Ivecos take up duty on the company's Continental tour programme - including Italy. Managing director Majory McClements described the Ivecos as "a most exciting buy."

Rennies 60-vehicle fleet includes 32 deckers dedicated to school contracts. The company is a driver competence centre for SVQs and is moving toward Investors in People.

ADAMSON

Mercedes-Benz conversion

SCOTTISH specialist supplier of coach conversions, Adamson of Dennistoun, Glasgow, has supplied a Mercedes-Benz 611D to Garelochhead Mini Buses in Dunbartonshire. Set up seven years ago by Stuart McQueen, Garelochhead now has its fifth T2 Mercedes.

It is intended that the new vehicle will be used mainly on private hire and contract work.

Standard features of the vehicle include luggage racks as well as Adamson's newly-introduced 'super-size' dropwell boot, increasing the luggage carrying capacity of all its new vehicles.

Added to this it is fitted with 24 high-backed seats with 'all-age' lap and diagonal seatbelts, power door, TV/video, PA system and illuminated name glass. **CBW**



Chequer wins Bowens hot drinks contract

Mike Morgan takes a look at some of the latest products on the market for the coach and bus industry

IN-CUP vending manufacturer Chequer Foods has opened the door to a lucrative new market for the Auto-cup range of hot drinks.

In partnership with New-castle-under-Lyme-based distributor, Crown Cup, the company has secured a contract with

Bowens of Tamworth.

The deal was sealed following Chequer's successful development of a custom-made dispenser unit designed to suit Bowens needs and offering three choices of hot drinks.

Each dispensing tube can hold 25 Auto-Cup insulated



Chequer Foods designed custom dispenser for Bowens

cups and offers customers the choice of Nescafe Gold Blend, PG Tips tea or Cadbury's hot chocolate brands.

Bowens carries a quarter of a million passengers each year.

Joint managing director Peter Meadows said: "Providing

our customers with on-board refreshments that people recognise and regard as high quality enhances the image of our service and provides added value to our passengers."

Contact Chequer on 01952 680404 or fax on 01952 684164.

More Rockwell low-floor axles

ROCKWELL has expanded its family of low-floor axles to fit a variety of coach configurations.

The new front non-drive steer axle, drive axle and planetary drive axle are designed to meet increased demand for accessible vehicles. For example, Rockwell expects 50 per cent of bus axle volume to convert to low-floor design within three years.

A feature of the FH-946 steer axle is the use of Easy Steer components which permit

reduced steering effort. The RC-26-720 inverted portal axle features bearings that can be set with rotating adjusters and hypoid/helical double reduction gear which are ground for smoother and quieter operation.

Model RC-26-633 is a compromise between conventional high-floor and low-floor drive axle designs. The axles' hub-reduction permits a smaller bowl diameter.

Contact Rockwell Automotive on 01789 764123.

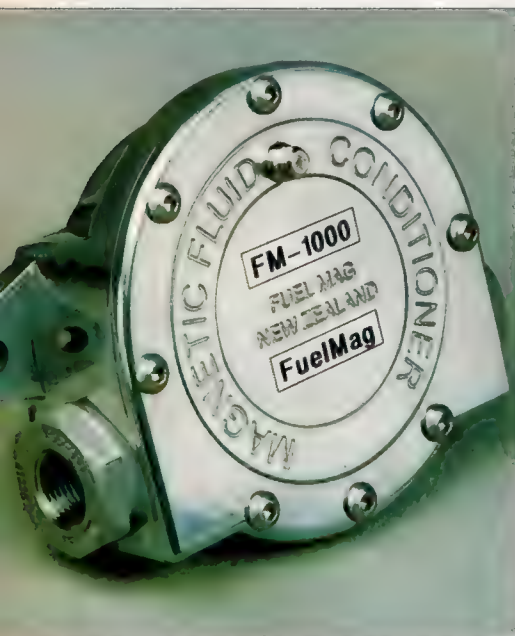
'Debugging' Diesel fuel

MISFIRES, power loss, fuel starvation and clogged fuel filters caused by a strange spaghetti like substance in diesel fuel are becoming more commonplace.

The cause is microbiological contamination which cultivates in the diesel and often results in expensive steam cleaning of fuel lines, filters and tanks.

Until now prevention and treatment is by using a biocide but Separ's new FuelMag contamination unit is claimed to be a safe and cost-effective alternative. It passes diesel through an in-line unit over very strong magnets which disorientate and break down the bug. Available in sizes to suit diesel engines up to 3,500 hp, the FuelMag prices start at £95.

Contact Separ on 01923 819041 or fax 01923 255052.



In-line unit uses very strong magnets



In control: the DeVilbiss Hose Tidy

Keep spray hoses tidy

SPRAY gun hoses can easily twist or get tangled in the booth. They sometimes get trapped under wheels, they can stir around the dust on the floor and, worst of all, can touch and ruin a good paint job.

The new DeVilbiss HTS-100 hose tidy keeps those hoses fully under control by running them along wall-mounted glide rails.

Ring DeVilbiss on 01202 571111 for further details.



Tel: 01733 467147



Fax: 01733 467154

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LEYLAND TIGER

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Plaxton Paramount 3500

53 reclining seats,
Cummins engine,
ZF automatic gearbox.

Tested until end of the year.

**2 vehicles at
£60,000 each
or nearest offer**

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68712/CM

BEDFORD DOMINANT

Two axle, rigid body, 45
seats with 4 tables, 1979,
7 months test

£2900

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Two axle, rigid body, 55
seats, 1978, 5 months test

£2200

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68706/CM

SUPREME COACHES

1990 MAN 16.290 Jonckheere Deauville

51 seats, toilets etc. Long MoT
£77,500 + VAT

1991 MAN 16.290 Jonckheere Deauville

As above. CHOICE OF 2
£82,500 each + VAT

1978 BRISTOL VRT LEYLAND 501 D/D

ECW low bridge/74 seats
CHOICE OF 2
£3,950 each + VAT

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(01702) 603996

68661/CM

1990 DENNIS DART,
Carlyle body, 36 seater, 15
standing, MoT Aug '97, 9m
length **£34,500 + VAT**

1991 DENNIS DART,
Carlyle body, 40 seater, 17
standing, 10m length, MoT
Dec '97 **£39,500 + VAT**

1989 LAG PANORAMIC,
49-53 seater, lap belts, MoT
Feb '98 **£52,500 + VAT**

Tel: 01703 663700

68702/CM

JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE DAF SB2300

1989,

51-seater, full executive,
recent engine re-build,
12 months MoT.

Possible part exchange

£61,000 + VAT

Tel: 01697 331276

68763/CM

1989 SCANIA K113 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT

53 reclining seats

CHOICE OF 2

Both vehicles have middle door,
Telma & in excellent condition,
used on tour work only they both
come with private plates

**£60,000 EACH OR
NEAREST OFFER**

TELEPHONE

0131 555 0034

68746/CM

MAN 10.180 1991 JONCKHEERE P35 DEAUVILLE

34 seats, toilet, MoT
Dec. 97, double
glazed, crew seat

£57,000

**01252 724010
SURREY**

68748/CM

Being Sold Due to Fleet Replacements

1991 MERCEDES 811. Alexander
Service Bus (manual), 31 + 10 standees,
double air doors, luggage pen, Telma
retarder, MoT'd until Jan '98. First class
vehicle inside and out **£28,000**

1989 MERCEDES 811. Service Bus
(manual), Reeve Burgess, wide bodied
(London spec), 27 seat + 12 standees,
luggage pen, Telma retarder, double air
doors. This vehicle has just had full retrim
and comes with re-conditioned engine still
with 11 months warranty **£22,000**

Both above can be fully viewed
and inspected at our workshops.

Tel: Harte Buses
Greenock

01475 888390/787781

68717/CM

1985 DAF SB PLAXTON 3200. 53
E-type seats, MoT July '97.

1985 LEYLAND PLAXTON 3500.
49 Vogel seats, rear toilet,
continental door, coffee units,
New MoT.

1987 DAF SB PLAXTON 3200
Mk III. 57 seats, MoT August '97.

PART EXCHANGE

Late Bova Futura required

All Offers considered

CLAYTONS of LEICESTER

Tel: 0116 2739818

66400/CM

1981 B58 VOLVO PLAXTON
SUPREME V. 53 seats, MoT
Sept '97, good condition
throughout **£11,500**

1983 LEYLAND TIGER
PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500.
49 retrimmed seats, toilet,
wired for TV, video and drinks
machine. MoT Oct '97 **£19,500**

Both vehicles are sensibly priced
for a quick sale 68734/CM

Part exchange considered

TEL: 01268 520205

**1982/3 DUPLÉ DOMINANT IVs &
GOLDLINERS** on Leyland Tiger
chassis. Semi-auto gearboxes, 12M,
power doors, 51 seats. Choice of 3, vari-
ous tests. **From £7,000 each.**

1982 DUPLÉ DOMINANT IV on Volvo
B10M chassis. Manual gearboxes, 12M,
power doors, 46 seats and toilet. **£8,000**

1989 LEYLAND SWIFT REEVE
BURGESS HARRIER Coaches, 35/37
coach seats, power door, boot,
re-panelled and painted white, full test,
choice **£20,000 each.**

Ring **01207 232718 (w)**
01207 570719 (h)

(Co. Durham)

68751/CM

DAF SB2300, PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200

1985, MoT Aug 97, tax
June 97, 55 seats with
seatbelts, radio/cassette/PA,
curtains, good condition.

£24,500 ono + VAT

Tel: 0181 531 7854

68805/CM

VOLVO B58 VAN HOOL ARAGON, auto, 53
retrimmed seats, all white, good looking
Alizee lookalike **£12,500**

1983 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE, 49
retrimmed seats, toilet, double glazing,
drinks, video, bunk, long MoT **£31,500**

1980 BEDFORD YMT PLAXTON SUPREME
IV, 53 retrimmed seats, seatbelts, power
door, replacement engine Oct 96, very
straight attractive coach **£5250**

1978 (T) BRISTOL VR, ECW body,
Lowbridge, choice **£4,500 inc tyres**

PART EXCHANGE CONSIDERED FOR ANY
OF THE ABOVE

68825/CM Tel: 01268 783878

1989 VOLVO Plaxton 3500, P.P., 49
recliners, video, toilet, drinks, Inertia
belts, T&T **£68,000 ono**

1988 DAF 2300 SB Algarve, P.P., 49
recliners, video, toilet, drinks, Inertia
belts, T&T **£43,000 ono**

1976 BEDFORD Duple 320, 57
recliners, T&T **£15,000 ono**

1989 MERCEDES 609D, 24 seat with
boot, T&T **£14,000 ono**

1988 MERCEDES 307D, 13 seat,
T&T **£3,500 ono**

1987 MERCEDES G-Wagon, 8 seat,
4x4, T&T **£6,500 ono**

Most in white, prices + VAT

01833 660471

68812/CM

1987 MERCEDES 609D. 19 seats,
tested January '98, seatbelts,
in very nice condition

£12,000 ono + Vat

1981 B58 AIR/LEAF Viewmaster, 53
recliners, tested till June '97, tax May,
seatbelts, good condition all round

£13,000 ono + Vat

1989 B10M MARK 2 Paramount
Executive, 49 recliners, seatbelts,
toilet, tea machine, drivers bunk,
wired for TV and video, tested till
November '97 **£65,000 ono + Vat**

Part exchange for older Volvo possible

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68824/CM

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This box will cost you
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Jim Russell Racing Drivers School

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1980 BEDFORD YMT DOMINANT II

Cherished plate, 53 seats, MoT
July 97 **£4,500**

1979 BEDFORD YMT DOMINANT II

Cherished plate, 53 seats, MoT
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Both vehicles are in exceptional
condition including seats, floor,
panels, boot, paintwork and tyres,
only for sale due to fleet reduction.

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68826/BE

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seats, power door, MoT Oct., £3,000 +
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68801/BE

BEDFORD YMT DOMINANT II, 53 seats,
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68813/BE

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take any article in part ex with cash

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68733/BOV

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MoT Jan '98.

49 seat executive.

Toilet, video, fridge,

hot drinks, boiler

and all usual Bova extras.
EXCELLENT CONDITION.

£59,000 ono + VAT

KINGS COACHES

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68802/BOV

DAF

DEAL OF THE MONTH!

1990 DAF SB3000,
Caetano Algarve, 49 seats,
full exec, low mileage, rear
toilet, radio / PA / cassette,
and all usual extras, full
MoT, and tax if required.

~~£62,500~~

£52,500

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68736/DAF

DAF JONCKHEERE BERMUDA 1982

49 recliner seat executive
coach with TV/video, toilet,
tea machine, courier seat,
re-conditioned gearbox fitted
17/12/96, clean coach, selling
due to replacement.

£18,950 ono + VAT

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67785/DAF

1992 J SB3000, full spec Caetano
Algarve, 49 seats, full MoT, used on our
own tour programme only, immaculate
condition. £85,000 + VAT. Fitzcharles
Coaches - 01324 482093.

66640/DAF

89 DAF SB 3000 LAG PANORAMIC ZF 6
speed gearbox, 49 R+C, video/monitor,
radio / PA / cassette, drivers bunk, drinks
machine, refrigerator, continental door and
centre sunken toilet. FOR VIEWING OR
FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS
VEHICLE PLEASE CONTACT SCANIA
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67265/DAF

HARRIS COACHES

1993 'K' DAF

SB3000/VAN HOOL

48 seat, air conditioned, fully Auto.
Executive, Continental exit, toilet,
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throughout, choice of two identical
vehicles with long MoT's.

£112,000 ovno

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68704/DAF

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1982 MB200 PLAXTON SUPREME VGT

51-seater, courier seat,
toilet, power door,
side lockers, ZF splitter,
FSH, recon engine, clutch,
MoT Nov '97

£15,500 ono + VAT
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Essex

68708/DAF

DENNIS



DENNIS 290 GX

Reg 11/95

Plaxton 350 Premiere, 49R, toilet,
DG, video, curtains, Continental
door, seat belts, low mileage.

MoT 11/97.

We require to increase our fleet.

1 or 2 quality PX's considered.

£130,000 or Offers

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1990 G JAVELIN, ZF manual Duple 320,
53 recliners, radio/PA, seat belts, servery,
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Telma retarder, tested February 1998,
very clean vehicle **£47,500 + VAT. Tel:**
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Routemasters,
AEC engine, 60 +
64 seats, original
LT specification,
varying tickets.

£7,000 + VAT inc tyres

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68814/DD



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1996
1997

Volvo. Coach of the Year
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B10M

DOUBLE DECKER



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Authorised Distributor for East Lancs Coachbuilders

DOUBLE DECKERS

1981/2 LEYLAND ATLANTIAN AN68

72-75 seats, single entrance. Northern Counties & Roe.
PSV tested.

Prices from: £4,500

1980/1 BRISTOL VR Mk III

Gardner 6 LXB engines, ECW low height, 74 seats,
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68039/DD

1977 DAIMLER FLEETLINE. Double
decker, 68 seats, MoT Nov '97, £3,500 +
VAT ono. **Tel: 01525 860694.**

68740/DD

1980 LEYLAND TITAN, 73 seater, Park
Royal body, air suspension, MoT Aug '97,
recon engine 1995 and gearbox January
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68741/DD

FORD

FORD R1114 DOMINANT II. 53 seater,
1980, 10 months MoT, very clean £3,000
ono + VAT. **Tel: 01204 795693.**

68045/FO

NEW FORD 8 seat + driver, belted and
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available now + 90 Transit 13 crew bus,
diesel, low mileage. **Tel: Blythwood on**
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68815/FO

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LEYLAND TIGERS

Ex-MOD, LHD,

1985-1989, low mileage,
Wadham Stringer body
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£6,000-£10,000

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67703/LE

LEYLAND



Leyland 698 Reeve Burgess

1986, 30 seats or 12 wheelchairs with Linwell
Hideaway lift, tinted windows, Everspacher
heating, radio/cassette, power door. All owned
from new, low mileage, new MoT, choice of 3

£6,500 + VAT

PATTERSONS COACHES

West Midlands 0121 471 2000

68046/LE

1979 LEYLAND LEOPARD, semi auto,
53 seats, MoT Nov 97, reliable contract
vehicle, well maintained, £4,000 + VAT.
Tel: 01394 284150 Suffolk.

68713/LE

1978 LEYLAND NATIONAL 10m, 41
seater with luggage pen. Totally
refurbished with coach seats and
headrests, professional stereo system etc,
full PSV MoT until 24.10.97. £7000 ono.
Tel: 0181 467 4431.

68809/LE

LEYLAND LEOPARD S/A 53 seats,
1981, long MoT, excellent condition, used
on tours. **Tel: 0831 265 979.**

68803/LE

1991 PP LEYLAND LEOPARD,
Willowbrook service bus, re-body, 48
seats, Diptac, features GMPTE category 2
specification, 48 seats and 21 standees,
test February 1998. **£13,950. Tel: 0161**
223 2035.

68853/LE



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1994 - VOLVO B10M PLAXTON EXCALIBUR

50/53 reclining seats with arm rests, Telma
retarder, fully carpeted, radio and PA
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1990 - VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500

53 reclining seats with arm rests, Telma
retarder, rear emergency door, Webasto,
courier seat, double glazing.

1988 - VOLVO B10M VANHOOL

49 reclining seats with arm rests, centre
continental door, centre fixed toilet, radio
and PA system, courier seat, Telma, double
glazing.

1992 - VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PREMIERE 350

50/53 reclining seats with arm rests, Telma
retarder, rear continental door, fully carpeted.

1990 - VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500

51 reclining seats with arm rests, Telma
retarder, rear saloon toilet, rear emergency
door, Webasto.

1993 - VOLVO B10M JONKHEERE

50/53 reclining seats with arm rests, Telma
retarder, courier seat, radio & PA system,
Moquette to roof, double glazing, rear
continental door.

1990 - DAF 12/290 BOVA FUTURA FHD

55 seats, courier seat, double glazing
curtains.

1989 - DAF MB230 VANHOOL ALIZEE

51 reclining seats with arm rests, centre
continental door, centre sunken toilet,
Moquette to roof, double glazing, radio &
PA system.

1986 - DAF MB200 DUPLÉ CARIBBEAN II
53 reclining seats with arm rests, Moquette
to roof, rear continental door.

1988 - DENNIS JAVELIN PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200

49 reclining seats with arm rests, courier
seat, rear sunken toilet, rear continental
door, Telma retarder.

1996 - DENNIS JAVELIN 240 PLAXTON PREMIERE 320

53 reclining seats with arm rests, courier
seat, rear emergency door, fully seatbelted.

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glazing, courier seat, Telma retarder.

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VEHICLES INCLUDES
VEHICLES WITH

- 49 seats/ washroom
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1988, Perkins Phaser II**
28 seats/12 wheelchairs, with Linwell
hideaway lift, Everspacher heating and
power door. Low mileage, new MoT.
CHOICE OF SEVEN
£6,500 + VAT
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1994 (M) RENAULT MASTER, luxury 16
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seats, wheelchair ramp, part exchange to
clear, £2,495 - **JAG 0121 502 2252.**

LDV 400 FACTORY MINI BUS.
1994 M reg, 20,000 miles, 2.5
diesel, 5 speed, power steering,
3 point inertia belts. New PCV
COIF.....**£11,250.00 + VAT**
RENAULT MASTER T35D.
Wheelchair accessible con-
version. 1990 H reg. Diesel, 5
speed, hydraulic lowering sus-
pension, ramp, 12 seats (non
PSV).....**£7,950.00 + VAT**
FREIGHT ROVER 350. 1986 D
reg. 14 seat PCV, 2.5 litre diesel,
5 speed, front passenger
entrance, 12 forward and 2
inward facing seats in moquette
trim, 3 point inertia belts.

.....**£3,500.00 + VAT**
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1993 L reg, 8 seat plus driver, 2.1
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version with forward facing seats
and belts, 23,000 miles, red.
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June 97, exterior white, tacho fitted.
.....**£2900**

1987 20 SEATER FREIGHT ROVER. MoT
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.....**£2800**

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All the above vehicles plus VAT

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Luxury spec, high roof, LWB,
15 high back coach seats, all
with belts **£8,750 ono**

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Semi high roof, power
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Robin Hood Service Bus
Taxed and tested, 19/21
seater, good condition,
seatbelts fitted.

Well worth a look.
£3,200 ono + VAT
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24 seats with bow, power steering, front
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21 seats, front entry, power steering, seat
belts, high back, very tidy vehicle
£10,995 + VAT
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TOYOTA OPTIMO
19 seater, power door, exceptional
condition for year, velour interior,
aircons, a nice coach for only
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**M reg
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8 seater, finished in blue, power steering,
electric windows, choice of 3, one blue, two
white, good condition and value for money
from
£7,995 NO VAT
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G90 OPTIMO
21 seater, 6 cylinder turbo, full luxury spec,
a credit to its former owner, finished in white
in superb condition
£19,950 + VAT
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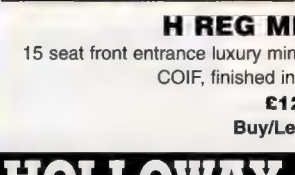
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Choice of 16-21 seat layout, 6 cylinder
turbo, full luxury specification, PA, stereo,
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Only one remaining
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Luxury 16 seat Mini-coach. Brand new conversions.
Lowered front entry step, high back moquette seats
with 4-point inertia reel belts, luggage racks, roof vent,
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re-inforced side frames, 6-speaker stereo, full COIF.
£16,995 + VAT or finance from £75 pw
**ALWAYS AVAILABLE
READY TO GO**



H REG MERCEDES 410D
15 seat front entrance luxury minibus, high back moquette seats, seat belts,
COIF, finished in white, very good condition
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MERCEDES 811Ds AVAILABLE NOW!

1991 J Mercedes 811D Reeve Burgess Beaver buses, 28 seats plus 12 standees but will reseat to 33, wide entrance, automatic gearboxes with retarders, attractive grey/yellow/multicolour chevron moquette, Purmo heating, Diptac rails/bell pushes, very good condition, choice of four.

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1990 G Freight Rover 20-seat coach, Carlyle Mark II bodywork, Isuzu 2.8 litre diesel engine with sound-proofing pack, 5-speed gearbox, blue/grey moquette coach seats, power door, resprayed in brilliant white and ready NOW, excellent motorway performance, one only, £6,995.

1987 D MCW MetroRider 23-seat coach, Perkins 6-litre Phaser with Allison AT545 gearbox, 23 luxury coach seats in attractive grey/blue chevron pattern moquette with matching moquette centre roof panel, luggage racks, power door, repainted, being MoT'd and resprayed, certified seat-belts to all passenger seats, uniquely durable and versatile midicoach, this week's star buy at just £8,495 fully inclusive in YOUR LIVERY - if you're quick!

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1991 H Iveco 49.10 "New Generation" TurboDaily, Phoenix Mark II bodywork, 5-speed manual, power steering, 23 or 25 seats, power doors, luggage pen, Diptac handrails and bell pushes, Purmo saloon heating, just three left, outstanding condition and value, £12,495 each.

1989 G Freight Rover Sherpa 20-seat buses, power doors, beige/orange seating, calibrated tachos, recently resprayed in attractive orange/white livery, matching pair, £5,495 each.

1989 F Mercedes 609D Reeve Burgess 20-seat bus, power steering, manual gearbox, 6 standees Diptac rails, saloon heating, beige/orange interior, price includes full preparation and respray in brilliant white, AVAILABLE NOW, £11,495.

1990 G Iveco 49.10 TurboDaily, Robin Hood/Phoenix bodywork, 5-speed manual, power steering, 23 or 25 seats, power doors, luggage pen, resprayed in brilliant white, new MoT, AVAILABLE NOW, one only, £7,995.

1988 E Renault S56 Mark II Northern Counties 25-seat bus, automatic gearbox, coachbuilt front, fawn/multicolour interior, power steering, disc brakes, just one left at £4,995.

1988 E Renault S56 Mark II Northern Counties 27/29 seat buses, 6 standees, coachbuilt front, disc brakes, automatic gearboxes with retarders, attractive grey/red/blue interiors, power steering, luggage pens, just two available, very rare with this seating capacity, £5,495 each.

1988 E Iveco 49/10 TurboDaily, Robin Hood bodywork, 5-speed manual, 23 or 25 seats, power doors, luggage pens, limited choice, price includes all usual preparation plus a fully reconditioned engine with 12 months unlimited mileage warranty, just £6,495 each.

1988 E Freight Rover Sherpa 20-seat bus, 5-speed manual gearbox, 20 seats, power doors, red/grey interior, excellent value, one only, £3,495.

1987 D MCW MetroRider MG150/3 Midibuses, 23 seats, Diptac handrails, Perkins 6-litre/Allison 4-speed gearbox, power steering, power door, attractive red patterned moquette seating, full soft trim interior, extra ventilators, saloon heating, very good specification. Choice of three only, £6,995 each.

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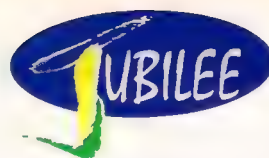


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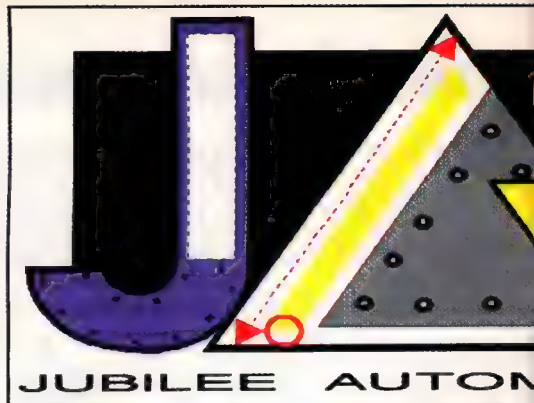
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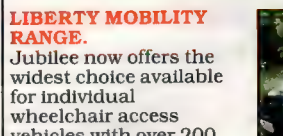
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 - 1982 LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON, 55 seater retrimmed
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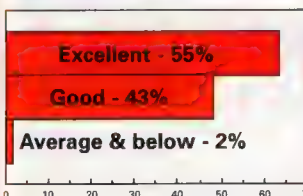


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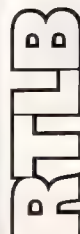
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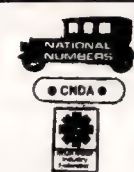
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The successful candidate will ensure that the highest standards of vehicle road-worthiness are achieved through the effective management of manpower and spares. Therefore the individual must have a sound knowledge of vehicle certification, V.I. inspection standards and proven organisation, management, team building and leadership skills.

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Applications please in writing enclosing your CV to:-
Mr P Johnson (Director), Johnsons Coach Travel,

32 High St. Henley-in-Arden, Solihull, West Midlands, B95 5AN.

Closing Date: Monday 10th March 1997.

66635/APP

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OPERATIONS MANAGER (Canterbury)

Applications are invited for this challenging position, based at one of Kent's busiest Bus Stations, in which the successful applicant will be responsible for the management of 80 staff and 36 vehicles which operate local bus, contract and an extensive network of schools' services.

Applicants will need to display sound financial awareness, together with a 'hands on' approach in managing and motivating their staff to achieve increased profit and improvements in quality.

Applications including full curriculum vitae should be made to:

D. Topliff, Managing Director

STAGECOACH (SOUTH) LIMITED,
Lewes Enterprise Centre,

112 Malling Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2RB

Closing date for applications is 10th March 1997

Stagecoach
EAST KENT

68720/APP

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR – CPT UK

The Confederation of Passenger Transport UK (CPT) is the National Trade Association for bus, coach, light rail, tram and metro operators. On the retirement of the current post holder, CPT wishes to appoint an Operations Director.

The Job

The Operations Director plays a leading role in the development of policies to promote the operational efficiency of CPT members. This is a high profile post involving detailed analysis of matters such as the operational implications of proposed changes to legislation brought forward by the UK and EU Governments. A close relationship would be maintained with CPT Member Companies, both directly and through Committees. The Operations Director represents the industry's views on operational matters to UK and EU Governments.

About You

Substantial experience of the passenger transport industry in an operational capacity would clearly be a significant benefit to your application. You will need to demonstrate evidence of an understanding of the technical issues which affect the operational efficiency of the passenger transport industry. Good communication skills, both verbal and written are essential. The ability to liaise successfully at senior levels within the passenger transport industry and the Government will be important.

You will need to bring energy and enthusiasm to lead a small team and to develop policy alongside demands of the industry for advice and guidance on operational matters.

Salary:

CIRCA £40,000.

Please send your cv (marked Private and Confidential) to:

Mrs V Palmer,
CPT UK,
Imperial House,
15-19 Kingsway,
London
WC2B 6UN

Closing date for applications is 10th March 1997.

Candidates wishing to discuss on a confidential basis, any particular aspects of the selection process, are invited to telephone Mrs Palmer on 0171 240 3131



68729/APP

You know the name..... but what's the number?

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B — B

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Roadlink Int' tel: 01902 636206

Buss Bizz, Vehicle spares
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London: 01932-569 177

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C — C

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▼ Engineering

New md for Allison Transmission Europe

And post's former occupant takes on a worldwide role

ALLISON, the transmission division of General Motors has made a series of senior appointments geared to improving worldwide sales of its automatic gearboxes for coaches, buses and trucks.

Lawrence Dewey,

by Mike Morgan

currently managing director of Allison Transmission Europe, becomes general sales manager for Allison worldwide.

Michael Headly is promoted to replace Mr

Dewey. Mr Headly takes up his position on 1 April at the company's European headquarters in The Netherlands.

He will be responsible for sales and support in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.



Michael G Headly: md

▼ Union

Only busman on RMT exec

WHEN Eastleigh bus driver **Andy Lister** takes his seat on the RMT Executive Council for the first time he will be the only busman in the country to be elected to the trade union's full-time governing body.

Six thousand RMT members from Land's End to Bristol elected Mr Lister, 43, on to the executive council for a 12-month stint. Although the appointment means him giving up bus driving for a year, he will still be the union's branch secretary at Solent Blue Line where he's worked since 1982.

The other 10 seats on the newly-formed executive council at the union's headquarters in Euston Road, London, will be taken by rail and dock employees.



▼ Bus

Delaine's oldest employee

DELAINE Bus Company receptionist, **Isobel Lunn** (left) is still at work as the firm's oldest employee and has no plans to retire despite having just celebrated her 80th birthday.

Isobel joined the south Lincolnshire com-

pany when her husband, William was a driver.

For many years she was a full-time conductress but, when her husband died, she continued to work as part-time receptionist saying: "Working at Delaine, alongside the fam-

ily, really has kept me sane."

Nevertheless, she has yet to beat the record of driver **Jimmy Culshaw**, who was still working for Delaine aged 89. Jimmy died in 1971 after 36 years behind the wheel.



Payment (please tick as appropriate)

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	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£72.00	£129.00	£183.00
Eire/Europe 1 year	£115.00	Airmail 1 year	£147.00

Coach and Bus Week and Transit (New Subscribers)

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£121.00	£217.00	£308.00
Eire/Europe 1 year	£164.00	Airmail 1 year	£196.00

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.
YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title?

(Tick one only)

- Owner/Director ☐ 01
Senior/General Manager ☐ 02
Engineering/Service Manager ☐ 03
Other (please specify) ☐ 04

2. What is your company's main business function?

- Bus Operator ☐ 01
Coach Operator ☐ 05
Coach & Bus Operator ☐ 02
Local Government ☐ 03
Other (please specify) ☐ 04

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3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate?

(Tick all that apply)

	Buses	Coaches
1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> 01	<input type="checkbox"/> 10
6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 02	<input type="checkbox"/> 11
11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 12
16-25	<input type="checkbox"/> 04	<input type="checkbox"/> 13
26-39	<input type="checkbox"/> 05	<input type="checkbox"/> 14
40-100	<input type="checkbox"/> 06	<input type="checkbox"/> 15
101-400	<input type="checkbox"/> 07	<input type="checkbox"/> 16
401-1000	<input type="checkbox"/> 08	<input type="checkbox"/> 17
1000 +	<input type="checkbox"/> 09	<input type="checkbox"/> 18

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/purchase and/or specification of the following?

(Tick all that apply)

	Pur	Spec	Rec
Vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/> 01	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	<input type="checkbox"/> 23
Parts/Spares	<input type="checkbox"/> 02	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 24
Oil/Fuel	<input type="checkbox"/> 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	<input type="checkbox"/> 25
Breakdown	<input type="checkbox"/> 04	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 26
Insurance/Finance	<input type="checkbox"/> 05	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 27
Fuel Cards	<input type="checkbox"/> 06	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	<input type="checkbox"/> 28
Training	<input type="checkbox"/> 07	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 29
Venue/Attraction Tickets	<input type="checkbox"/> 08	<input type="checkbox"/> 19	<input type="checkbox"/> 30
Ferry Crossing	<input type="checkbox"/> 09	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	<input type="checkbox"/> 31
Hotel Bookings	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	<input type="checkbox"/> 32
Theatre Tickets	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	<input type="checkbox"/> 33
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> 34		

5. What type of work does your company undertake?

(Tick all that apply)

- Private Hire ☐ 01
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British Tours ☐ 03
European Tours ☐ 04
Local Government Contracts ☐ 05
Emergency/Breakdown Services ☐ 06

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